

DOMESTIC ANECDOTES *see 62g*

OF THE

FRENCH NATION, *K*

DURING

THE LAST THIRTY YEARS.

INDICATIVE

OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

P R E F A C E.

TH E French revolution, to most persons, appears to be an object not less interesting for its singularity, than for its magnitude. To contemplate twenty-five millions of people, starting suddenly from their chains, animated as it were by one soul, may indeed excite admiration; but with closer research, and more extensive speculation on the affairs of France, it will be found, that the present revolution, is not, as is generally imagined, so unexpected or sudden. This LIBERTY, on the contrary, is the accumulation of much toil and much time. It has not burst no instantaneous existence, but has formed the

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secret meditation of the French philosophers and politicians. It has been produced, to employ an expression of our English Horace, by

“ The patient touches of unwearied Art.”

POPE.

There was certainly a great necessity for a
REVOLUTION.

For many years, the French government had imagined, that it might with impunity multiply the privileges of an order, already by far, too much privileged; and it never suspected, that the vilified victims on whom it *dared to tread*, would on their side *dare to revolt*. The *nobility* basked in the continued sunshine of court favour; and the *Tiers Etat* were contemptuously thrown into an ignominious obscurity. The military department yet remained open to the emulation and hope of the citizen; but an order was latterly issued that required a proof of *nobility* from those persons whose merits, and whose valour aspired to a distinguished rank.—Again, whenever a

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man of noble descent, devoted himself to agricultural pursuits, his estates, (as if they were ennobled by the hand that cultivated them) were exempted from the taxes which were levied on commoners; while, (what is still more difficult to credit) the deficiency in the taxes, paid to the government, arising from this odious privilege, was made up by an *additional levy* on his unfortunate neighbours, who thus dearly paid for the honour of having a person of noble extraction in their neighbourhood. It was not, therefore, sufficient to be insulted by the *privilege* of this *noble*, but the people were compelled even to *pay* for the honour of being insulted!

Such oppressions (among a variety of others) were too obvious, not to have been hourly felt by the *people* at large. But their slavery was hereditary; and the execration that was concealed in their hearts, did not venture to issue from their lips. They groaned and laboured.

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A nation may, perhaps, be so habituated to the vilest slavery, that it shall be incapable of enjoying liberty. There was an ancient people, who, when they were offered freedom by the Romans, preferred their ignoble servitude. The genius of every nation is not sufficiently firm to support the weight of freedom; and it is not improbable, that the abject Frenchmen we now describe, would have eternally worn their manacles without a blush.

But of what the MANY can have no conception the FEW realise. Men exist, perhaps, in all ages, who are born to form new systems, and correct the old. Never did such a galaxy of sublime minds appear together, as in the last half century, in France. Every star darted its influence; but there were among these, several planets of a marvellous magnitude.

In ages unfavourable to philosophy, the elevated mind was often a solitary speculator; his labours were then the abortions of debility

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debility and terror; and he was often more known by his sufferings, than his success. The caverns and the stakes of the Inquisition; the Bastille and the Star chamber of government; shortened his periods, or his life.

Within the present century a great *Revolution* was effected in the human mind. Philosophers ceased to be isolated. It is but of late that the people have been taught to *read*, and still later, that they have learned to *think*.

It must not be dissembled, however, that among the croud of philosophers, many artful and designing men, insinuated themselves; and in professing the amiable sentiments of philanthropy; the most fervid indignation against despotism; the liveliest horror of superstition; they only covered with a beautiful mask, a deformity too repulsive to be seen openly. These enemies of their fellow men, have but one view; to gratify,

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licentious appetites, and to set a city in flames, that they may get something in the pillage.

This libertinism of mind, we all know, has been fatally displayed by a sanguinary faction in the French Convention; while such men exist, no nation can enjoy freedom; for like a certain malady, (which is fortunately rare) the people will produce its own vermin, which will prey on it, till it expires by the creatures of its own creation,

These men are, in fact, more accomplished time-servers, than the most debauched courtiers. Their libertinism of mind, is pliant; for the corruption of the heart is favourable to take any impression its owner wills. Nothing so elevated which they will not grasp; nothing so low which they will not solicit; they crawl like a serpent full of wiles and poison; they fly like a vulture full of audacity and destruction.*

We

* Du Clos has thus admirably observed on this pernicious sect, " I cannot help blaming those writers, who, under

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We claim pardon for dwelling so long, in characterising these spurious philosophers; because it has become fashionable to confound such with those virtuous and sublime minds, who are to be distinguished from these men, not indeed by their professions, but by the purity of their morals.

It was the genuine philosophers, who gradually enlightened the people, by their reasonings, and animated them by their eloquence. To *oppose* POWER when it became TYRANNY, but to *support* it, when it was JUSTICE.

under the pretence, or, really desirous of attacking superstition, which would be a laudable and useful motive, if they limited themselves by the duties of a *philosophical citizen*, sap the *foundations* of *morality*, and strike at the *bonds of society*; the more madly, that it would be dangerous for them to make proselytes. The *fatal* effects they produce on their readers, is to make bad citizens and dreadful criminals in youth, and unhappy men in an advanced age; for there are few who *then* enjoy the melancholy advantage, to be sufficiently perverted, so as to remain tranquil."——*Consideration sur les Moeurs*, p. 34.

The

PREFACE.

The present work results from a desire of becoming more intimately acquainted with the *cause* of the *revolution*. For this purpose the authors of this work united in their researches, and gave into an excentric course of reading, which afforded them materials, which they presume, are very little known to the public. To be familiarised with the leading characters of the French nation, and with the *nation itself*, they considered, was only to be effected by an examination of those multifarious memoirs of the day, with which the French abound. They were, perhaps, in one respect, not totally inadequate to the task they assigned to themselves; for they were acquainted with the greater part of the anecdotes they now bring forward, and have sometimes even corrected the notices they collected, and added some original information. They have spared no labour of research. Their collections were as copious, as they were rare; and it is not only from printed books,

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books, but from manuscript information, that their materials have been drawn.

To offer to the public, the *anecdotes* of the *thirty last years*, which have preceded the French Revolution, is really developing to their eye, the *causes* which have led to this epocha, too memorable in the annals of the world. These amusing sketches may, perhaps, even excite the curiosity of the most indifferent, and interest the attention of the thinking reader.

It is true, that when at some distant day, the pencil of history shall display in glowing, yet faithful colours, the names of the first leaders who conducted the Revolution; the motives which animated them; the means they employed to ensure success; the characters of the persons who assisted them; the good they might have operated, and the evils of every kind they have produced; Posterity will close with horror and indignation this part of the history of man, and will
be

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be tempted, more than once, to tear these pages from the volume. But, as Time has not yet drawn away the thick veil which conceals from us the dark and insidious means, which have prepared this revolution; as we are too near, or too much interested in the events, to judge them without some partiality; as (to confess the truth) we have not the pen and genius of a Tacitus, to trace them with a firm and skilful hand, we are far—very far, from undertaking so difficult a labour. We do not offer the public a *history*; we only solicit attention by some light *memoires*.

We hope not to be censured, for what we have not undertaken. Having long meditated on the French Revolution, we have been led by our leisure and inclination, to discover, as well as we could, its causes; we, therefore, had recourse to those sources which afforded us intelligence of various kinds; and we collected in one whole
the

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the facts which could furnish objects for reflection, and often enable us to pronounce with some certainty on so important an object. A portion of these facts we now offer to the public. They certainly will feel those emotions of indignation, which we too often have experienced; and they will generously bestow a sympathetic sigh on the unhappy French, who with a genius more brilliant than solid; a government devoid of energy; a nobility without moderation; men of letters without principles, or to express ourselves more correctly, with principles destructive of the social order; have themselves led to the ruin of their kingdom; and have made it bleed through all its veins.

We have sometimes admitted anecdotes of a private nature, but have, when it was thought necessary, spared the names of the persons. These little flowers have been intermingled to relieve the aridity of our pursuits; and we know well that if we do not

instruct

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instruct, we may be pardoned; but that not to *amuse* in an age like the present, would, indeed, be *unpardonable*. However disagreeable may be the facts we relate, we consider them as of no little utility. To shew to our fellow citizens, Vice under all its verfatility of appearance, is to shew them its deformities; and to unfold those of a great nation, is to shew OUR COUNTRYMEN what *are the disorders that lead to a Revolution*; and to remind them still further, that A TOO SUDDEN REVOLUTION MAY BE MORE TERRIBLE THAN THE DISORDERS IT WOULD RECTIFY.

CON-

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DOMESTIC ANECDOTES, &c.

PHILOSOPHERS.

THE Revolution in France has been effected by that intrepid spirit of Philosophy which ventured, even in the grasp of despotism, to elevate it's voice. A virtuous indignation inspired the first propagators of that system of rational equality, which has been so fatally perverted. Several of these great men have fallen victims in their attempts to liberate their fellow citizens; for they had no party and were truly disinterested. Oppression could not exist with a more terrible force than it did in France in the reigns of Louis XIV. and his successor. The Philosophy, however,

however, which seemed at first to have only aimed at the happiness of its fellow citizens, (and it considered the Universe as one City) lost in its gradual progress something of its purity. The declaimers against politicians, became themselves politicians; and the avowed adversaries of oppression, became themselves oppressors. The solitary and virtuous speculator was now seen caballing with adventurous Catalines; and it was no more a disinterested virtue that he pursued, but a designing party which he assisted.

The
French Phi-
losophers
divided into
Sects.

The history of the French philosophers, who were divided into *Sects*, may be read in the following sketch. It presents an accurate portrait of them, such as is perhaps not very distinctly known in this country. It is necessary to observe, that it was written so far back as the year 1760. It forms part of the Preface to the *Memoires secrets pour servir à l'histoire de la Republique des Lettres*.

The invasion made by Philosophy into the
republic

republic of letters in France, forms an epocha, rendered memorable by the REVOLUTION it produced in the *minds* of the people. *All the world* is now acquainted with its *consequences* and its *effects*. The authors of the *Persian Letters*, and *Philosophical Letters* had scattered the seeds; but *three kinds of Writers* have above all others contributed to the maturing of them.

First the ENCYCLOPEDISTS, in perfecting ^{Of the Encyclopedists.} Metaphysics; by embellishing these abstract speculations by a lucid order, they employed the most proper means, to dissipate the clouds which Theology had hung over them, and thus annihilated Fanatism and Superstition.

To these succeeded the ECONOMISTS; who ^{Of the Economists.} chiefly directing their studies to morals and practical politics, sought to render the people happier, by more closely uniting the bonds of society, by a reciprocal communication of good offices, and of interchanges and rights better understood, and in teaching man to

apply himself to the study of nature, the mother of lasting enjoyments.

Of the
Patriots.

At length, times of trouble and oppression, engendered the PATRIOTS, who ascending to the source of the Laws, and Constitution of Governments have shewn the reciprocal obligations of subjects and sovereigns; have dived into the depths of history and its monuments, and eternally fixed the great principles of administration.

This croud of Philosophers, who placed themselves at the head of the various departments of literature, chiefly appeared after the extinction of the Jesuits; the real moment from which the *present Revolution* takes its original date.

Remarkable
expression
employed
thirty years
ago.

We observe here the remarkable expression, of the *present Revolution*; and these words were written *thirty years ago*. But for this notice the reader might have imagined that they had been the words of the *English Writer*. This little fact is sufficient to shew that

that clear and comprehensive minds were, so far back as the period in question, persuaded that a *great Revolution* had *taken place*. It had not indeed excited *mobs*; but it was hourly gaining ground in the *minds* of the *people*.

THE portraits of the French Philosophers are further sketched, by the hand of a political Limner, with singular energy and skill.

It is of late (1768) that there has arisen a sect of Philosophers in France, who with unparalleled audacity appear to employ a regular system, to impart a fatal light to the minds of the people; to shake all belief and to subvert religion by gradually sapping its foundations. Some who are the light troops of the confederacy, point their sarcasm and irony, under significant allegories, and ingenious fictions; with these agreeable compositions they cover with an indelible ridicule the ministers of religion, its dogmas, its

Character
of the
French Phi-
losophers.

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liturgy, and even it's *morality*. Others, more profound speculators, in the full armour of erudition, and with an invulnerable metaphysic, present themselves with an uncovered face, and attack it, with open force; and exerting against it the most formidable arguments, not meeting with athletes worthy to wrestle with them, they have unhappily remained victors in the field of battle. At the present moment as this incredulous race, consider their labours to be advancing rapidly; as they wait for the gradual aid of time, till their light gaining every hour, shall totally dissipate the night of prejudice, ignorance, and superstition, they attack their adversaries in their last holds; they pretend to prove that *Politics stand in no need of the aid of Religion* for the support and government of a kingdom. It is against this assertion, so ancient and so universal, and which the defenders of Christianity, for their final argument, pushed to the extreme, that these Philosophers

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phers unite all their forces, and seem preparing a body of works, which are daily making their appearance in France. A treatise was published (in 1768) intitled,

“ The Holy Contagion; or, The Natural Account of a dangerous publication.
“ History of Superstition.” The result of

this dangerous work, is, that fear was the origin of the different systems of religion; that they are all characterised by a superstitious melancholy, and sinister genius, which can only make their sectarists hypocritical and gloomy, and render them cowardly citizens; that all religions were designed to serve the purposes of despotism, and yet tend to destroy it, whenever that despotism attempts to throw off the yoke of priestly servitude; that their morality is entirely foreign and opposite to that of nature, which alone can establish and maintain society. In a word, that all religions are in their essence, false, and intolerant, and that a sovereign who would really consult his own happiness

and that of his people, should only strengthen his throne by erecting it on the basis of *liberty* and *truth*. Throughout the whole volume, there prevails a *republican* spirit; and antipathy against the sacerdotal power. Its force of argument and vehemence of style must have attached readers, and perhaps it found too many admirers.

Who can doubt that such works have made converts to their fatal opinions, since the legislators of the present revolution appear to have drawn all their edicts, and their dogmas from these kinds of political Bibles? Are not the actual religious principles of the Republic here fully unfolded? Their hatred to the ecclesiastical power, was early displayed. But it did not become those who have sometimes eloquently declaimed against *persecution*, themselves to turn *persecutors*. If the axe is to fall on *men*, because they are *priests*, it is the *same* intolerating *bigotry* which kindled fires to burn *men*, because they were

Philosophers. If my fellow citizens perish daily before my eyes, alas! it signifies little whether they were priests or philosophers. The *power* that condemns them, whatever name it may *assume*, is still one and *the same inhumanity*.

It will not be improper here to insert an account of a congenial publication of the same period; and which will be sufficient to display the infernal genius of the French presses. The following work was written for the instruction of the *Ladies!*

An abominable production, bears for title, Account of a work that aims at the extinction of Religion.
 “ Letters to Eugenia; or, a Preservative
 “ against Prejudices.” By its motto,

“ *Arctis Religionum animos nodis exsolvere pergo.*”

The author intimates his design to liberate men from the tight bonds of religion. A wise design doubtless!

It is not difficult to judge by this first ringing of the alarm, what principles it contains. It consists of twelve letters, and is divided
 into

into two parts. In the first, is industriously repeated whatever has been said on the sources of credulity; on the necessity of examining religion; and on the absurd and even dreadful notions entertained of the Deity. The writer then examines the Scriptures; the christian system; discusses its proofs, and fundamental dogmas; the immortality of the soul, and that of a future state; the mysteries, sacraments, ceremonies, prayers, austerities, &c. of Religion. In all these topics he collects the arguments that have been employed by the French philosophers. But although by his dilations, they lose something of their energy, they are the more dangerous, as they are treated in the most intelligible manner, and the abstrusest metaphysics are brought down to the understandings of women.

The second part offers more original speculations. The author, after having overturned the evangelical virtues, and what is called christian perfection, pretends to prove, that
the

the government stands in no need of religion to maintain itself; that it is even pernicious to it; that it is not advantageous to professors; that human or natural morality is the only true, and the only useful one, by which society can exist. He attempts to establish and confirm the celebrated assertion of Bayle, that "A Republican of *real* christians could not subsist." He closes, by wishing for the greatest toleration of opinion. He appears to have a concealed propensity for *atheism*, without, however, declaring himself, otherwise than by attempting to prove, that this system is not so absurd, and that it can not easily be the result of our ignorance.

The style of this production announces a man of superior rank. It's delicate irony is that of one who laughs with the polished politeness of a courtier. It's erudition is concealed by all those happy turns which prevailed in the best conversation. He appears to have read the most celebrated treatises on this subject,

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subject, and to have appropriated their dangerous maxims by his own familiar and natural manner. The work is a body of atheistical doctrine, calculated for the idle, either among the illiterate, or the most fashionable. France produced courtiers who could write in this popular and alluring style; but not one, who warmed by an honest indignation, raised the pen, to call back to good sense and morality, the weak, the ignorant, or the female sex. We continually discover poison emitted in every shape, but we rarely find it's antidote. All ranks and both sexes were now insensibly sinking into the most terrible depravity of morals. They did not fall from a precipice, but the decline was gradually smoothed, and what was worse, it had flowers scattered over it.

Courtiers
write a-
gainst Re-
ligion.

Atheistical
Anecdote.

SUCH indeed was the irreligion prevalent amongst all classes, that a friend informs us when he called a *Bourgeois*, a Deist, he answered,

swered, *Non monsieur? Je ne suis pas deiste, je suis un anti-dieu!*—and we are also informed, that in the library of a tallow-chandler (who we suppose was also an anti-dieu) he had industriously amassed a collection of such dangerous books, to the number of 600 publications! Thus existed French philosophy among the vulgar!

THE sect of the ECONOMISTS are thus described. They are political philosophers, who have written on Agrarian topics, or of the interior administration; who united to form a systematic body which is to overturn all the received principles in matters of government, and to form a new order of things. These gentlemen would first have rivalled the *Encyclopedistes*, and raised altar against altar; but they mutually approached each other, and many of their adversaries joined them, so that the two sects appear to be confounded into one.

The Economists described.

Quesnay,

Of the first
Economists.

Quesnay, the ancient physician of the Marchioness of Pompadour, was the Coryphæus of this band; he has written, among other works, *The Rural Philosopher*. Mirabeau, the author of *L'ami des hommes*, and *La theorie de l'impôt*, was the under director. Every Tuesday they dined together, and held their conferences at his house. They were at length joined by the celebrated M. Turgot, a practical philosopher, and a great attempter of experiments, says my reporter. These modest scholars pretend to govern men, from their closets, by their influence on popular opinion, the regent of the world.

Their character has been given by the well known Linguet, who, however, wrote it, in consequence of an offensive criticism, which appeared in a Review, formed and directed by the Economists themselves. Linguet, to an ardent imagination, unites a satiric genius; the following passage is written in his boldest manner.

I

A sect

A sect (he writes) has arisen which prides itself above all, in directing princes, and in domineering over the subsistence of the people; a sect which counts for nothing the lives of men, and which has dared to establish for the basis of its belief, that the productions of the earth can alone be considered as necessary in politics; a sect, which has ever in their mouths, the word *Economy*, and which favours, if not directly by its principles, at least very certainly by its consequences, the most dreadful dissipation; a sect the more dangerous, because it devotes itself to excite fanaticism; because it seduces ingenious minds, by the imposing appearance, and grandeur of their mysterious speculations: in affecting a singular haughtiness, they adroitly insinuate themselves into the closets of the great; their adepts attain to opulence, in declaiming continually on the misery of others. They form indeed, a monstrous mixture of the French frivolity, and the heavy inconsistency

sistency of the English. So much for Linguet's opinion of our nation ! It is very necessary to observe, that this abuse of English philosophy is inserted in a work, which bears for title, *A Letter on the Theory of Civil Laws*; in which he examines whether *it is true that the English are free*, and whether the French should imitate their operations, or envy their government.—Here he defends the paradox, that *despotism is the best government*. He pleads his cause with such ingenuity and brilliancy, that the reader, for a moment, is deluded by his sophisms, and prefers the government of oriental tyrants, to that of England itself. But if the English Constitution be treated with contempt, Montesquieu is not spoken of with more guarded expressions; and this sublime politician, Linguet abuses with as little reverence as he would have done a diurnal scribbler.

The doctrines of the Economists explained.

The discoveries, the principles, and doctrines of the ECONOMISTS are thus described.

They

They considered, that all real riches are produced from the earth, because this inexhaustible mother unceasingly reproduces the most necessary aliments. If, said they, we suppose two states, one of which shall only produce corn, wine, and fruits, and the other should possess all the mines of gold, diamonds, and the most precious metals possible, it is proved, that at length, by the continual barter that will exist between them, the first without diminishing it's abundance, or rather rising by a gradual prosperity, will in the end ruin the other, by exhausting it's factitious riches. And at length, said they, the first would even absorb it's individuals, who having nothing more left by which they might acquire a subsistence, they would sell themselves. Hence population would increase; a new multitude of hands would produce new riches. The earth would yield in proportion to it's cultivation.

From this ideal hypothesis the Economists

C

deduced

deduced an incontrovertible axiom that the agricultural state, would become the most flourishing by that happy circle of agriculture augmenting population, and population extending agriculture. They then proved that *France* was the happy land of promise; and that it *can exist* on the rich fertility of its *soil*. These simple propositions lead to a vast number of more refined speculations; and the sect was at length reproached that they rendered their system impracticable, by its incomprehensibility. M. Mercier de la Riviere who wrote a bulky economical volume entitled *De l'Ordre naturel et essentiel des Sociétés politiques*, at first obtained a considerable reputation; because nobody could understand his work. The Empress of Russia in consequence invited him to assist her councils by putting in practice his sublime theory; he went to Petersburg, but after a short residence returned with a reputation considerably diminished. It was agreed, that not only no

one

The Economists
write unintelligibly.

one could understand this economist, but that he did not understand himself.

In 1762 a detestable work, no doubt by a French Philosopher, made a considerable noise. We give it as the clearest indication possible of that design of *abolishing religion* and its *ministers*, which has lately been displayed by the National assembly. It was entitled the *Four Necessary Things*. The necessity of destroying the Jesuits---of separating France from the papal power---of abolishing episcopacy, or at least of humiliating priests---and the last necessity, was that of annulling *religion* in toto. The author shews each necessity, and kindly instructs his reader in the manner to attain his object. It is the *plan* of the *revolution*, in what relates to the *clergy*.

Necessity of
abolishing
Religion.

If this is Philosophy, let us burn our books; let us hasten to Caffraria; and let us wander among woods in primæval barbarity. Shall I be told that if *such* Philosophers may sometimes go *too far*, their intentions, neverthe-

less, are pure, and their morals good. To such Philosophers the following anecdote is directed.

An Abbé
preaches
Materialism

IN 1751, the Abbé de Prades maintained a thesis in the Sorbonne, in which *Materialism* was discovered in every part. The secular and ecclesiastical powers, were roused with indignation at this public impiety, directed a forcible remonstrance to the parliament, and the Abbé was exiled. The Materialists regarded him as their persecuted apostle. The king of Prussia (who it is not necessary to say was a Materialist) invited, with fraternal affection, this exiled apostle to his court. His Majesty received the fruits of such virtues. This infamous Materialist was a serpent in the bosom that cherished him; and sacrificing the gratitude and fidelity, so justly due to his royal protector, formed, in conjunction with the Bishop of Breslaw, a plot against Frederick, and attempted to injure the country which had afforded him an asylum. This crime

was punishable by death. The king had the generosity only to imprison him till peace should be restored. On this subject he wrote a letter to D'Alembert, and employed this expression, "I will then deliver him to his country and his friends, *if he can have any.*"

The man who is so unfortunate as to be a Materialist, may doubtless be an honest man: we cannot help the illusions of the mind; but he who *propagates* this terrible system, can never be such. A true Philosopher removes pernicious prejudices, but never would destroy any thing that is *useful*, even were it a *prejudice*.

The *Revolution* appears strongly *predicted* in the following anecdote :

The Revolution predicted in 1763.

On the 20th of July, 1763, the Abbé Labat preached a sermon, at Paris, of which the following is a faithful extract.

"In the preceding reigns Sovereigns displayed their piety by protecting the ministers

of the church. Now the magistrates persecute innocence and oppress religion. The people's minds are deluded by a forced moderation, and are lead by designing politicians. *Soon or late a Revolution will spread throughout a kingdom, where the Sceptre and the Censer are violently agitated against each other. The crisis is violent, and the Revolution cannot be remote.'*

The Abbé Labat, was certainly a more rational prophet than Nostradamus or Fleming; he indeed regarded this object only in one light, which was that of the church; but it is apparent that he was sensible of the revolution which existed *thirty years* ago in the *minds* of the people. I have only to add, that the preacher was immediately imprisoned in the Châtelet,

A Poet censures Hereditary Kings and is applauded.

THE Poets were sometimes Philosophers. In a tragedy of Dorat's, in 1763, there was a passage relative to hereditary kings, who are said

said to claim a right to live amid the most voluptuous pleasures, and to consign the care of the public welfare to their ministers. This trait somehow or other, escaped the eye of the *Censor*, and was received with the loudest bursts of applause. The town, little accustomed to boldness of sentiment like this, was astonished. The lines are a forcible allusion to Louis XV.

Au trone du berceau ces Monarques admis,
Ont droit de vegeter dans la pourpre endormis,
Et chargeant de son poids un Ministre supreme,
De garder pour eux seuls l'eclat du diademe.

These Monarchs from the cradle mount the throne,
And sleeping in their purple, vegetate;
'Tis to their favourite they consign the pressure,
And keep themselves, the splendour of the crown,

A work of no small importance in Gallic literature, was published about the year 1774, with a professed intention of combating the modern Philosophers. The "Trois Siecles de la Litterature Françoise," by the Abbé

The Philosophers attacked by a formidable Critic.

Sabbathier de Castres, is well known by connoisseurs, as a critical work of great merit, and singular acumen. There is no doubt, that the writer taking the adverse party, has given into, at least, as great a violence as that which he exposes. But though his facts may be aggravated, and his criticism severe, yet both are founded on truth. He observes in his preface, that his readers may be surprised to find decisions on these authors very different from that incense which they had hitherto received from fear or flattery. But (he adds) if the multitude is once informed of the secret springs which they have set in motion, for the success of their works, to swell out their reputation, to render their maxims acceptable, and augment their partisans; if we can shew an offensive and defensive league, established in their *Sect*, to render it predominant; incense at all times burning, to perfume the members which compose it; venal mouths purchased to cry out continually for an apotheosis in favour of

of

of their chiefs, and dark clouds maliciously scattered over those talents capable of diminishing their own; if the reader will reflect on all this, he will applaud us for boldly expressing sentiments, which every honest and wise man has long seen and felt. It is curious to observe, that the Abbé concludes his preface by assuring himself of the protection of the *Government* against the Philosophers.

In another place, our critic expresses himself in a singular manner, on a right of which an Englishman is jealous; the liberty of the press. “ This freedom the Philosophers are “ continually imploring, and panegyrising “ with extreme ardour, desirous, however, of “ reserving the privilege to themselves. This “ freedom of the press, would be *the surest* “ *means of corrupting the universe*. The Philosophers incessantly repeat that by the “ collision of minds, *light* is effused; there “ are *certain matters* on which this collision “ of minds produces a *conflagration*.”

The Freedom of the Press, censured by a French Politician.

This

This word *conflagration*, is a text for a volume of commentary. We are far, very far, from recommending *the least restraint on the freedom of the press*; but it would not be amiss if we were to pause a moment on this subject of *conflagration*. *Fire engines* should be prepared before the *flames* break out.

Voltaire's
Observation
on Religion.

Philosophers may proceed in the search of truth till they bring it to the verge of perdition; they may gradually annihilate a useful town built of stone, with the view of erecting a visionary city, with streets of diamonds; which, like an Eldorado, the world can never see. Voltaire was heard to say, that *Religion* was a vast citadel, which it was not adviseable to attack openly, but rather to sap secretly; that the miners had long been at work, and though the edifice looked as well as ever, and even more venerable for its age, it would *suddenly fall into ruins*.—We must ne-

Du Clos
alarmed at
the Philosophers.

ver forget the judicious sentiment of Du Clos, an honest man, and a liberal Philosopher; he

saw

saw the object at which this sect was aiming, and he, probably, *foresaw* it's inevitable consequences. Disgusted with the extreme licentiousness of their doctrines, he exclaimed, "*These men will do so much, that at length they will make me religious.*"

The Clergy had, since their great assembly in 1765, made a formidable collection of all the publications against religion, which were diffused throughout France. It was their first intention to undertake an elaborate refutation of these works; but either this was impossible for their number, or they judged that it might announce the impotence of their defence. They therefore, in 1775, to extricate themselves from this dilemma, thought proper to substitute, instead of a solid and complete refutation, a kind of sermon, or manifesto against the incredulous. It bears for title,—“AdVERTISEMENT of the General Assembly of the Clergy of France, held at Paris by the permission of the King, in 1775, to the

The Clergy collect irreligious publications but do not condescend to refute them.

I

“faithful

“ faithful of this kingdom, on the advantages of the Christian Religion, and the pernicious effects of Incredulity.” This was presented to his Majesty, by a deputation from the Ecclesiastical corps ; and afforded a fund of merriment to the philosophers and unbelievers at Paris.

To this advertisement, the Clergy added a condemnation of many anti-religious books, which had appeared since the last assembly, held in 1765. The list may gratify the curious—*Le Christianisme dévoilé—L’antiquité dévoilée par ses usages—Le sermon des cinquante—L’Examen important—La contagion sacrée—L’Examen critique des anciens et nouveaux apologistes du christianisme—La Lettre de Trasylbule à Leucippe—Le Systeme de la Nature—Le Systeme social—Les questions sur l’Enclyopedie—De l’Homme—L’Histoire critique de la vie de Jesus Christ.—Le bon sens.—L’Histoire Philosophique*

phique et Politique du Commerce et des Etablissement dans les deux Indes, &c. &c.

These books are condemned *in globo*, as containing false principles injurious to God, and his holy attributes; favouring or teaching atheism; full of the poison of materialism; annihilating morals; introducing a confusion of vices and virtues, destructive of the peace of families; extinguishing those sentiments which unite the orders of society; authorising passions and disorders of every kind; tending to inspire contempt for the holy writings; overturning their authority; aiming to deprive the church of the power it has received from Jesus Christ, and calumniating it's ministers; adapted to make subjects revolt from their sovereigns; to foment sedition and troubles; destructive of all revelation; replete with sarcasms and outrages against our holy law, and the adorable person of Jesus Christ, our Saviour, scandalous, rash, impious, blasphemous, and as offensive to the divine Majesty, as pernicious

Philosophical works described.

pernicious to the welfare of empires and society.

The Abbé Raynal particularly attracted the notice of this body; he is here said to be, “ One of the most seditious writers among the “ modern unbelievers.” *L'un des plus séditieux écrivains parmi les incrédules modernes.*

The King received this address in the most favourable manner, and appears to have been as justly alarmed as the clergy themselves. The Philosophers saw and meditated; laughed, wrote, and at length remained masters of the field. The lamentations of the ecclesiastical power, were the preludes of their approaching victory. The clergy every month, made *Auto da fés* of books; it is certain, that there were some, who lamented that the day was past when they might have *burnt men.*

Opinion of a
true Christian
on the
Philosophers.

A little poem by M. Tanevot, which bears for title, “ *Philosophisme*,” is an ironical attack

on

on this sect. The advertisement prefixed to it, may serve to give the opinion entertained by a *true christian*, of these Philosophers. “ A
“ false philosophy, says he, animated with
“ less of independance, than presumption, has
“ now arisen with an undaunted countenance,
“ and arming itself with a thousand poisoned
“ arrows, throws them at religion, which it
“ pursues with a singular *ferocity*. Some-
“ times it's attacks are in the open day, and
“ sometimes it marches in the darkness of
“ the night. We must not deny the
“ rapid progress it makes daily. We *are*
“ *near the moment of a general corruption*;
“ fatal effect of the extinction of those pure
“ virtues, and regulated manners, of which
“ religion is an unfailing source, and which
“ formed the glory of our ancestors. But
“ what converts our grief even into tears, is,
“ those perils to which our youth, are now ex-
“ posed. What will become of the hope of
“ the nation, when it's children, abandoned
“ only

“ only to incredulity and licentiousness, *ab-*
 “ *jure the faith* and *virtues* of their fathers ;
 “ and that they will in future have *no other*
 “ *motive* than a *base personal interest* ? ” Con-
 sidering this to have been written full forty
 years ago, the writer is a tolerable prophet.

Philoso-
 phers at-
 tacked on
 the Stage.

PALLISSOT had exposed the French Philo-
 sophers in his comedy, of “ *Les Philosophes.* ”

A piece in which Rousseau is represented with
 the severest ridicule ; Louis XVI. was much
 gratified by this comedy. The writer soon saw
 himself, in consequence, declared a common
 enemy ; and his literary existence, and it is
 said, his life itself, was in great danger. He
 wrestled with the continued persecutions of
 his antagonists. But when he had prepared
 another vigorous attack, in a comedy called,
 “ *The Dangerous Man,* ” the Encyclope-
 dic party had power enough at the court and
 the theatre, to hinder it's representation. It
 was, however, published, and was by no

means inferior to the preceding piece, for the severity of it's humour and satire.

The philosophical party, appears to have let pass no opportunity of conveying their sentiments to the public, in the most striking manner. A custom had long existed, since the reign of Louis XIV. to pronounce annually a panegyric on Saint Louis, before the French Academy. Whenever one of the Encyclopedic party was appointed for this purpose, he generally quitted the beaten track, and gave into those eccentric strictures which were pointed at the ecclesiastical, and the ministerial powers. The Abbé de Besplas, undertook this office in 1775, and by the boldness of his observations was greatly applauded by the spectators, and even by the academicians, since one of them in a moment of enthusiasm, interrupted the orator, by exclaiming, "Have courage, Monsieur l'Abbé, and proceed." The Abbé indeed had chiefly

The Philosophers through the annual panegyric of St. Louis convey their opinions.

D

turned

turned his oration to the side of politics and the administration. In speaking of the deeds of the administration of St. Louis, he attempted to shew, that by its wise ordinances *he* had actually laid the *foundation* of the *present philosophical government*. In reviewing the reign of Louis XIV. he strongly censured the ministry of Cardinal de Richelieu; he painted him with the odious colours in which his despotism must appear to the eyes of the partisans of liberty and the true patriot. This gave such offence to the Duke of Richelieu, that he formed, with the rest of the courtiers, a strong cabal against the Abbé.

The emissaries and spies of the Archbishop of Paris were immediately sent forth to find out matter for an information against the Abbé. After much inquiry, they accused him of the following heavy crimes; of having in a Christian pulpit, pronounced a prophane discourse, in which he affected never to call *Louis IX.* other than *Louis*, and never *Saint Louis*;

Louis; and by an impiety more reprehensible, in a moment of *Economical* fanaticism, to pay his court to the new Sect, of having cried out *Sainte Agriculture!*

And to close with all parties, the doctors of the Sorbonne refused to give their approbation to a panegyric of Saint Louis, in which Cardinal Richelieu, the founder of their house, was so ill treated. Such was the state of things through all the departments of the old government, because an *Economist* ventured to give some strictures on the politics and administration of the times!

ABOUT the same period (1775), the celebrated Abbé Maury, who, on St. Augustin's day, delivered his panegyric before the assembly of the clergy, likewise gave offence by a desire of appearing singular. The holy prelates were greatly irritated, because he ventured to preach *Toleration* before them; and in noticing the late new declaration in

Abbé Maury
offends his
brothers by
preaching
Toleration.

respect to the vows of the Monks, which the government ordered should not be binding, if taken before the age of twenty, he hazarded saying, that he *wished that even that term had been prolonged*; and in the character of a *Bishop of fortune* he drew a picture of those who arrived at this ecclesiastical dignity by the chance of birth, and not by their personal merit; and at last he seemed to prescribe to them their duties by a lively and pointed satire of their ignorance, their voluptuousness, and the general corruption of their manners. The Cardinal de la Roche-aymon immediately signified his pleasure to him, which was, that he would not appear before him: and every prelate went home wondering that the Abbé Maury should have thought that the golden gate of preferment was to be opened by such rough handling.

The Philo-
sophers are
clamorous
for Tolera-
tion.

Toleration was the universal cry of the Philosophers; but the ecclesiastical power probably
knew

knew that when these artful men should be permitted to fix themselves on the *steps* of government, they would soon force open the *door* of its temple. On the subject of *Toleration*, the following anecdote interests by the illustrious characters concerned in the farce.

When Voltaire arrived at Paris, an interview took place between him and Franklin. After the first compliments, which by the way were more adulative than comported with the character of a Briton, and above all of a stern Republican, the doctor presented his grandson to Voltaire, in soliciting for him his *blessing*. The Philosopher of impiety, relished the pleasantry; and to render the farce complete, he rose from his chair, and with a patriarchal air, laid his hands on the head of the child, and solemnly pronounced, in a loud voice, these three words; GOD, LIBERTY, and TOLERATION. All the pious were shocked at the American, who, they said, burlesqued religion in asking the *blessing* of Voltaire.

Farcical
Anecdote of
Voltaire and
Franklin, on
Toleration.

These Philosophers are intolerant.

That the Philosophers who were so clamorous for *Toleration*, were themselves by no means *tolerant*, appears by the following anecdote: The *great* monarch of Prussia thus expressed himself on the subject of religious toleration. "I never will constrain opinions on matters of religion. I dread, of all others, religious wars. I have been so fortunate as that none of the Sects, who reside in my states, have ever disturbed the civil order. We must leave to the people the objects of their belief; the form of their devotion; their opinions, and *even their prejudices*. It is for this reason I have tolerated the priests and monks, in spite of Voltaire and D'Alembert, who have quarrelled with me on this head. I have the greatest veneration for all our modern philosophers; but indeed I am compelled to acknowledge, that a *general toleration* is not the predominant virtue of these gentlemen."

It is very curious to observe, that these *Philosophers* who were incessantly composing fine declamations against the horrors of war, and painting with all the glow of a rich colouring, the injustice of persecutions, were *among themselves* in a state of eternal warfare, and insatiable persecution. It is true, Philosophers fire with no cannon, and tie to no stake. But the fury with which they assaulted each other, evinced, that had they cannon or stakes, their adversaries would have been or suddenly destroyed, or slowly burnt. Their inveteracy was, indeed, confined to an epigram, or what they called, a *diatribe*; but an epigram or a diatribe, may shew the same desire of inhumanity and despotism, which tyrants on the throne, or in the church, have exercised. Of many of the *private* characters of these Philosophers, we have rarely favourable testimonies of the perfection of their system; but we must learn to distinguish between the *French Philosophers*; too many

The Philosophers in a state of domestic discord.

The French
Philosophers
to be distin-
guished.

intriguers and designing men, dishonour the name. The difference is great between such philosophers as Mirabeau, Boulanger and La Mettrie, to Rousseau, D'Alembert, and Montesquieu. Voltaire, who has been called Micromegas (little-great) must, as usual, be placed between; often actuated by the interested and base motives of the one, he had often, all the sublime views, and philanthropy, of the other.

A SONG ON THE ECONOMISTS, WHICH
APPEARS LIKE A PROPHECY.

A prophetic
Song.

The present song is certainly the most curious article in this volume. It is to be found in more than one work dated ten or twelve years back. It might be otherwise considered as a recent forgery, artfully inserted in works which might have been easily made to bear an old date. But I am informed by many, that it appeared in several of the French almanacks of ten years ago;
and

and what confirms the whole, I am acquainted with more than one Parisian, who recollects having learnt it as a fashionable song about the same period, when Turgot was minister.

This song most amply discloses the whole system of the present Republic; and seems rather a description of an event past, than of one foreseen by an enlightened and acute mind.

The stanzas beginning, *On verra tous les états, &c.*—*Du même pas marcheront, &c.*—

Puis devenus vertueux, &c. Plus de moines langoureux, &c. And the last stanza relative

to the king, are all remarkable. They are, without a claim to inspiration, real prophecies; yet the author would not certainly aspire to a

A Philosopher an exacter prophet than Fleming.

seat near the fanatic Fleming.

Vivent tous nos beaux esprits,

Encyclopédistes,

Du bonheur François epris,

Grands économistes;

Par leurs soins, au tems d'Adam

Nous reviendrons, c'est leur plan:

Momus les assiste,

O gai!

Momus les assiste.

Long live our men of wit!

Encyclopédists;

Warmed with the happiness of
the French,

Long live our great Economists.

It is by their cares we are going
to return

To the primæval days of Adam,

Momus assist them,

O charming!

Momus assist them.

C.

Ce n'est pas de nos bouquins,
 Que vient leur science ;
 En eux ces fiers paladins
 Ont la sapience :
 Les Colberts et les Sully
 Nous paroissent grands, mais, si !
 Ce n'est qu'ignorance
 O gai !
 Ce n'est qu'ignorance.

On verra tous les états
 Entre eux se confondre,
 Les pauvres sur leurs grabats,
 Ne plus se morfondre,
 Des biens on fera des lots
 Qui rendront les gens égaux ;
 Le bel œuf a pondre.
 O gai !
 Le bel œuf a pondre.

Du même pas marcheront
 Noblesse et roture ;
 Les François retourneront
 Au droit de nature ;
 Adieu parlements et loix
 Ducs et grands seigneurs et rois ;
 La bonne aventure,
 O gai !
 La bonne aventure.

Puis devenus vertueux,
 Par philosophie,
 Les François auront des dieux
 A leur fantaisie :
 Nous révèrons un oignon
 A Jesus d'amer le pion ;
 Ah quelle harmonie,

It is not from our old books,
 They gain all their science,
 It is in themselves these Quixotes,
 Find all their knowledge.
 The Colberts and the Sullys
 Appear great men—Pshaw!
 This is mere ignorance,
 O charming !
 This is mere ignorance.

We shall see all the states,
 Confounded together ;
 The poor on their straw beds
 No more shall complain.
 They will make lots of the na-
 tional wealth
 Which will render all men equal.
 What a golden egg will be laid !
 O charming !
 What a golden egg will be laid !

Alike will be seen to walk
 The nobleman and the citizen ;
 The French will return
 To the rights of nature,
 Farewell to the parliament and
 the laws,
 Dukes, lords, and kings ;
 What a happy time !
 O charming !
 What a happy time !

Then become virtuous,
 By philosophy,
 The French will have gods
 To their own fancy !
 We shall worship an onion,
 Jesus will lose the game ;
 What a harmony !

O gai !

O gai !

Ah quelle harmonie.

Alors d'amour sûreté,
Entre sœurs et frères ;
Sacrement et parenté
Seront des chimères :
Chaque père imitera
Lot, au jour qu'il s'enivra,
Liberté plénière,
O gai !
Liberté plénière !

Plus de moines languoureux,
De plaintives nonnes ;
Au lieu d'adresser aux cieux
Matines et nones :
On verra ces malheureux
Danser, abjurant leurs vœux,
Galante chaconne,
O gai !
Galante chaconne.

Partisans des novations,
La fine sequelle !
La France des nations
Sera le modèle :
Et cet honneur nous devons
A Turgot, et compagnons,
Besogne immortelle,
O gai !
Besogne immortelle.

A qui devons nous le plus ?
C'est a notre maitre,
Qui se croyant un abus,
Ne voudra plus l'être !
Ah qu'il faut aimer le bien,

O charming !

What a harmony !

Then the security of love
Between brothers and sisters ;
Sacraments and relationship
Will be turned to chimeras,
Every father will imitate
Lot, whenever he gets drunk,
We shall have full liberty !
O charming !
We shall have full liberty.

No more of languishing monks,
No more of complaining nuns ;
Instead of praying to heaven,
Matins and vespers ;
Soon will these unfortunate per-
sons
Dance, and abjure their vows.
What amorous chacoons,
O charming !
What amorous chacoons !

Partisans of novelties,
What a cunning gang !
France of all nations
Will become the model.
And this honour we owe
To Turgot and his companions,
What an immortal labour !
O charming !
What an immortal labour !

To whom shall we owe the most ?
It is to our master,
Who thinking himself to be an
abuse
Will give up his all,

Pour

PHILOSOPHERS.

Pour de roi n'être plus rien ;
J'enverrois tout paitre,
O gai !
J'enverrois tout paitre !

Ah ! how he must love the
public good,
From a king to descend into no-
thing.
I would send all a packing,
O charming !
I would send all a packing.

CLERGY.

C L E R G Y.

THE higher class of the French Clergy regarded themselves as the first order in the state. Its honours and privileges were gradually usurped. In a work entitled "Interesting Reflections on the Claims of the Clergy of forming the *first Body* in the *State*." Our ingenious writer proved, that as their doctrines, instructions, and employments, were all analogous to a future state, they formed a society purely spiritual; that they should not meddle with temporal things; and that like their chief, they should take for their motto, "My kingdom is not in this world." Our

The Clergy gradually usurped the privileges of the first order in the state.

author wrote in a popular manner; he was ingenious, and anathematized.

FROM the year 1750 to the present hour, the clergy complain of a sect of philosophers whom they distinguish by the epithet of *modern*; and which, forty years ago, they observed, were insensibly gaining ground among the people, and conveying light to the dullest eyes. The two last monarchs of France were favourably disposed towards the clergy; Louis XV. was weak and fearful; too pusillanimous to be a fanatic, too superstitious to be enlightened, equally incapable of religious fervour, and that intrepid policy necessary to shake off the yoke of priesthood.

The religious orders were indeed so notoriously infamous, that almost every one (except the learned Benedictines) was distinguished by some dishonourable epithet or qualification. Passing over those which would offend modesty, such expressions as these were common—To

drink like a Cordelier—As stinking as a Capuchin—As gluttonous as a Bernardin;—and the omelets of the Celestines, were a favourite dish. The monks characterized
 Boileau has placed the residence of lazy effeminacy in the monastery of *Citeaux*; and Gresset imagined the palace of sleep at that of the *Victorins*.

A powerful struggle existed between the political order of the *Jesuits*, and some of the clergy. The world knows how this terminated; but the dissolution of this learned order, was not followed by its intriguing genius. The members still existed, and addressed the public through all the various shapes of the press. It is even supposed that several members of the *Sect of modern Philosophers* were these great, injured, and irritated scholars.

In January 1762, a convocation of forty bishops was assembled at the house of the Cardinal de Luynes, by order of Louis XV. to examine the constitution of the *Jesuits*,
 who

who were then becoming formidable every hour. Thirty-four were of opinion to leave their institutes as they were, but to subject the Jesuits to the general regulations of the clergy; the six others were for reforming them according to the regulations made at the conference of Poissy. To shew what *characters* were these *Bishops*, the flower of the clergy, it would not be improper to transcribe a satirical song on this occasion. The English reader would perhaps complain of its length; and it will, therefore, be sufficient to observe, that it contains anecdotes, unfortunately all too true, which shew these bishops to be as vile intriguers and dissolute libertines, as any of the Laics.

The heads of
the Clergy
dissolute cha-
racter..

We observe the same thing in a singular assembly, which was held by his Majesty's orders, in 1766. Their purpose was to examine the institutions of the various religious orders, and make the necessary reforms. Five archbishops were at the head of this tribunal,
their

their conference was not very pleasing to the clergy, who by no means were desirous of *reforming themselves*. The following epigram, as indecent, as it was poignant, was made on this occasion. I charitably hope, that all the *five* were not in the same case.

On a choisi cinq Evêques paillards,
Tous cinq rongés de v—— et de ch——,
Pour reformer ces moines trop gaillards;
Peut on blanchir l'ébene avec de l'encre?

Ink will not
whiten
Ebony.

In 1767, a publication appeared, proving, that these orders could not conscientiously acknowledge or receive the dictates of this assembly. That if, by an appeal to parliament, their opposition was not successful, they must *resist* all *legal* ordinances, and implore the mediation of the sovereign Pontiff. By all this it clearly appears, that the *clergy* had a *civil war* amongst themselves, and also, that they considered *reformation* as incompatible with *religion*.

The Clergy
consider re-
formation to
be irreligion.

But the learned, and I may add, the enlightened Benedictines, were clamorous for
E a re-

a reformation. This order possessed a vast income, and passed their solitude in literary labours of an utility as vast as their magnitude. To them we owe a work which no individual could have undertaken, and which even these learned and laborious scholars have not terminated. Their literary history of France, consists now of thirteen quarto volumes, and yet only reaches to the twelfth century. In 1765, a petition, signed by a considerable number of these religious (those who were philosophers, for all were not) was presented to the king. They complain in a summary way, of being confined to minute ceremonies, to puerile formalities, and troublesome regulations, which are of no utility to the nation. They pray, they may not any longer be compelled to have their heads shaved; to be forbidden the use of meat; to wear their frocks; to rise at midnight to go to minims, &c. in a word, they wish to appear and live like seculars. If these conditions were granted, they offered

Several Benedictines
petition for
abolishing
puerile customs.

offered to educate sixty youths gratis. This petition occasioned a great disturbance and dissatisfaction among the clergy.

The petition was not attended with success. The court was then not sufficiently enlightened, to perceive, that the education of sixty youths was of far greater utility to the nation, than having the Benedictines heads shaved, and their singing psalms at midnight. The adverse and more religious party, persuaded the court, that all this only indicated a licentious desire of shaking off all decent order. The king, therefore, expressed his dissatisfaction to the superiors; Dom Perneti, and Dom Le Maire, who had the greatest concern in drawing up this petition, which was written with every charm of composition it could admit, were rewarded for their ingenuity and philosophy, by being immediately exiled. Perneti took refuge in the dominions of the Great Frederic, and I believe became one of his librarians.

The petition
unfavour-
ably received

The Benedictines consider shaven heads, and singing at midnight as a matter of glory.

Philosophy was exiled, and bigotry worshipped. This affair of the petition did not here terminate. The religious would now be heard in their turn. They presented a reclamation to the King, in which they express their horror for the late attempts of their unworthy brethren; they vindicate the holiness of their frocks, their singing at midnight, and their shaven heads; all which they consider as matters of glory, as well as religion. The whole performance is written in a style as uncharitable, as it is inimical to the modesty, and the mildness of true christianity. It is a voluminous and heavy work; the other was a light and elegant page.

But the active hatred of these pious adversaries, could not remain silent. The fire of persecution was not extinguished in 1769. It would be uninteresting to enter into a minute detail of this domestic discord of the Abbey of the Benedictines. It is necessary, however, to convey an idea of it's prominent characteristics.

istics, as these give the spirit of the intolerance, and insatiable rancour of religious fanatics.

In 1769, although the unreformed party triumphed, they were not satisfied by a decision of their first superior, and the community took this occasion to publish another voluminous *Memoire à Consulter*. This brought forth a reply, concise, reasonable and conclusive. It exposes the internal contests existing in this congregation, from the earliest period of their establishment. The nation from these altercations, learnt that the religious orders, like other human institutions, were a continual prey to ambition, discontent and interest. At this period it was peculiarly unfortunate for the church to expose it's nakedness. The government began now to think seriously of reforming the monkish institutions, and the Benedictines were one of the richest societies.

At Ministers prefer re-forming the rich, to the poor communities.

Scandalised at these public exhibitions, which for sometime formed the reigning topic

of conversation, a council was held by the community, in which it was agreed, to disavow the memoir in question, that it might only be considered as the work of those restless individuals who had petitioned for their secularization. Such controversies appear to have been some of the last struggles between expiring bigotry, and that philosophy, on which the mind had now been nourished for a long time, and which began to appear in the vigour of youth.

The religious orders excite horror in the nation.

IN 1770, the religious orders excited more disgust than ever in the public, by the following pathetic incident. About this time, a Nun, who was on the point of making her last vows, hanged herself in the presence of her parents, who obstinately persisted in devoting her to this vocation. This interesting circumstance afforded Mr. De La Harpe, a fine subject for a tragedy, which he entitled "The Nun," and in which, he inveighs with

poetical indignation against these austere institutions. Such a drama *could not* be represented at Paris; and the author had recourse to the protection of one of the ministers, the Duke de Choiseul. He in return acquainted him, that the permission of publication remained with the chancellor; but at the same time, the sentiments are so pleasing and *congenial to his own*, that he desired to become his *bookseller*, and therefore sent him one thousand crowns on *account* of the edition. This anecdote does great honour to the duke; but it is given for the purpose of shewing the *disposition* of the *minister*, at that period, respecting religious institutions. It may not be amiss to add, that the tragedy was never represented; but every where the author was invited to read it; and it served to excite a warm indignation in the public against similar institutions.

In 1783, a subject of the same kind excited public attention. The convent of the nuns of St. Maudé, had long been a theatre of scandalous

scenes, and of fanatical persecutions. In the month of June, of that year, towards the fall of the night, a nun escaped, and she was soon detected. They hastened to inform the superior, and she immediately cried out to bring back the fair fugitive. Her whole flock, animated by their zeal, take on themselves the order which was directed to the servants. The doors are thrown open, and the nuns now pursue their late companion through the streets. The runaway was the first who reached the barrier of Saint Antoine. The others call to the keepers to shut the barrier, for that she was an apostate. The keepers seeing in this fugitive nothing which concerned them; nothing that was contraband; no bundles to examine; without attending to the zealous and breathless sisters, suffer her to pass; and touched by her tears and her intreaties, close the barrier against her pursuers. In vain these saints harrangued that it might be opened; they were obliged to return to their superior, who

who reproved them for committing this public scandal, and taking this opportunity of wandering about the streets,

The unhappy fugitive tremblingly alive, was conducted to the director, who softened her distress by assuring her of his protection. She told a concise, but powerful story of her griefs; that for a slight fault committed above a year ago, she had been rigorously imprisoned on bread and water; that her punishment was not only excessive, but that because she had by her indiscretion, revealed some things best known to the abbess, she had incurred her hatred, and was threatened at every hour with a renewal of her persecutions. That if she had committed a sin, in quitting a place where many sins had been committed, she was willing to die, but never to return. The simplicity of her address affected the director, he put her under the care of his lady, till the archbishop was informed of the whole matter. It is not known how this affair was concluded.

concluded. The abbess probably had some friend at court. It was, for a long time, the conversation of Paris, and renewed the horror of these dreadful establishments. It appears, however, that the archbishop permitted the unhappy nun to retire into another convent; if she did this, it was like a runaway lamb that is received by a butcher; who takes care to disenable it for the future of practising any such tricks.

The higher
Ecclesiastics
insolent.

THE pride of the Ecclesiastics, appears pretty clear by the following anecdote. M. De Conflans, joked with the Cardinal de Luynes, because he had a chevalier of the order of St Louis, for his train bearer. The proud prelate replied, that he always had one for this purpose; and the predecessor of this chevalier bore the name and arms of the *Conflans*.—It is a long while, answered the Marquis, that many unfortunate gentlemen in my family have been reduced *à tirer le diable*

diable par la queue, a gallic proverb to express extreme misery. His eminence was so confused at this lively reprimand, that he retired in haste, and made the Dutcheſs of Chevreux, at whose house he was, promise not to receive any more a man of wit, who did not respect a cardinal.

THE Abbé Maury, in 1772, preached a sermon relative to St. Louis, before that formidable literary body, the French academy. The old Cardinal De la Roche-aymon, loaded with all, but academic titles, aspired to a place in this celebrated corps. A deputation from the academy was made to the cardinal, to solicit an abbey for our preacher; a singular proceeding which had never yet been made, and which probably had never been made, had the academy not known the secret wish of this cardinal. The deputation received the most flattering reception; nor was the abbey refused. It was in this manner
ecclesiastical

ecclesiastical honours were at the disposal of an individual. Our cardinal had less in view in this affair, to recompense the talents of Maury, than to obtain for himself the first vacant chair in the academy.

When this cardinal became the archbishop of Rheims, he suffered in his old age, the fatal consequences of his youthful libertinism. Complaining one day of the gout to his physician, he said that he suffered the pains of the damned—What, my Lord, already? replied the malicious Esculapius.

The avarice
and politics
of the higher
Ecclesiastics.

THE following anecdotes will sufficiently shew the avarice and political views of the higher clergy: If these men thus oppressed their helpless brothers, what could be expected from their general character? It surely shews that mundane views alone occupied these spiritual governors.

It is necessary to inform the reader that as the clergy in France paid no taxes, it was usual

usual every five years to make a voluntary gift to his Majesty, of a sum from twenty to thirty millions of livres. This levy was conducted by an assembly of the bishops, who used to assess the ecclesiastical property, in their diocesses, in whatever form they pleased. It will appear that the bishops laid the heaviest part of these contributions on their *Curés*, and spared themselves.

In 1777, I observe the lower clergy loudly complaining of the heavy assess under which they bitterly groaned. That the bishops, in their districts, are unfeeling masters, who grind their inferiors; and while they are parsimonious of contributing to the accustomed levy, deprive, by their unmerciful exactions, the *Curés* of even a bare subsistence. The dreadful abuses employed in the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Rhodéz, gave rise to remonstrances and petitions. They not only attacked their bishop, but the general agents of the French clergy. At the head of these complainants was

The Prelates
oppress their
Curés.

The head of
the Com-
plainants
banished.

the Abbé de Portelance. It was acknowledged throughout Paris, that every article of oppression was founded; and it was hoped that the period had arrived when the sufferers would be relieved.

But their adversary was a politician by trade; and was familiarly acquainted with all the turnings of the court labyrinth. In June, 1778, he obtained a full condemnation of these remonstrants of his chapter, and a full permission in future to exercise his despotism, by whatever modes of tyranny his ingenuity could devise. The *Memoires* drawn up against him were suppressed as libellous and scandalous; and the unfortunate Abbé received a Lettre de Câchet, which exiled him to a place of the most dreadful solitude.

In 1780, the government resolved to withdraw their terrible lettre. But the intriguing bishop, as vindictive as politic, resolved to punish for ever the indignant diocesan who had dared to wrestle with his episcopal oppression.

pression. He was forbidden ever to enter his native city. It was thus a poor and suffering honesty was punished, and a proud tyrannic bishop triumphant.

IN 1777 an ingenious Journalist observes, that the spirit of that arbitrary and despotic government, which formed the essence of the close of the reign of Louis XV. was diffusing itself in the various orders of the state, but particularly among the higher ecclesiastics, who now seem more than usually disposed to exercise it, and exact a passive obedience. The ferments which have existed latterly at Rodez and Lyon, spread into other dioceses. Three publications in answer to the bishop of Lisieux's mandate to his Curés, were ordered to be suppressed by a decree of the king's council, as containing *dangerous propositions, tending to disturb the public tranquillity, and the respect due to the ministers of religion.*

Two years afterwards our Journalist, who

was

was a shrewed observer of his time, thus writes:

Anecdote of
the illegal
power of the
Bishops.

It is now several years that frequent contests relative to episcopal jurisdiction, have been raised by the *bishops*, who were for its enlargement, and the *Curés* for its restrictions. In 1779, one of these ecclesiastical dissensions made a great noise. The bishop of Chartres was opposed by the Curé de Digny: The cause came before the parliament at Tournelle, and the bishop, to the *astonishment* and the *loud approbation* of a crowded audience, was condemned to refund 30,000 livres with which he had illegally taxed his Curés.

What remained for our discomfited prelate? To be condemned in a court of law, at this period in France, was a matter of little consequence, if my lord had *friends* at court. To the court our bishop had recourse, and the condemnation of the parliament at Tournelle was *reversed*. Our prelate rose stronger from the earth on which he fell; and the holy brotherhood felicitated each other, in the most unguarded

unguarded terms of exultation, of the power they had acquired over these honest rustics their Curés, who had not yet found a *friend at court*.

The year 1780, presents us with another scene respecting the oppressed Curés. Those of the province of Dauphiny, finding at length the insufficiency of their petty allowance, which I am informed was often reduced to the miserable pittance of five-hundred livres, and knowing that they could not trust to the assembly of the clergy, now preparing to be held, they thought it very necessary, to employ themselves immediately on means to shew his Majesty the urgent want of an augmentation of income, and without which they could not any longer subsist.

The Curés
assemble,
and present
a petition to
the govern-
ment.

For this purpose, to testify that they were not led away by a refractory spirit, they humbly applied to their respective bishops, to ask their permission to assemble; and they were refused. They then had recourse to their

F parliament,

parliament, who authorised them. Two deputies were immediately chosen to lay at the foot of the throne, a faithful picture of their indigence.

They are
remanded to
their pro-
vinces.

Arrived at Paris, these deputies presented their petition themselves, to M. Necker, who immediately communicated it to the general agents of the clergy. The first step of their bishops, was to obtain an order from the King, who enjoined these deputies to *re-turn* to their provinces; which they were obliged to do the next day. Fortunately they had taken the wise precaution of printing their *memoire*, to which they had joined the opinions of nine of the most distinguished counsels. The *memoire* was soon distributed, and seized by the public with avidity; and if these oppressed men could not obtain a relief from the despotism of their bishops, the true character of the latter was amply exposed, and their cruel vexations were as fully execrated.

Two years afterwards (1782) notwithstanding

standing their deputies had been expelled from Paris, the affair they still considered as only held in *suspense*. They attempted to obtain justice by another mode, and the Curés of other provinces, uniting with them in the common cause, a new alarm was spread throughout the whole body of prelates. The general agents of the clergy, to crush all their attempts, immediately obtained a declaration, *registered* in the *parliament* of Paris, which renews with vigour all the former prohibitions of the Curés of the kingdom, assembling without permission.

In November of that year appeared *Les Remontrances des Curés*, well written and with moderation. The nature of their assemblies is there examined, and proved not to be illicit. The frequent edicts obtained by the intriguing bishops, are shewn to be not *laws*, but *illegalities*. It had been objected to these men, that the Curés of a diocese, do *not form a body*. The author establishes their

natural and civil right in this respect; *disputed* only, he adds, by *the higher clergy*, whose *constant endeavour* is to *destroy* the rights of the *lower*. Here follows a long detail of their usurpations. The eloquent writer closes by exhorting the Parliament to defend the oppressed pastors better than they had done, against their tyrannic bishops, by procuring them an honest sufficiency; by exposing their wants at the foot of the throne; by obtaining a more equitable partition of ecclesiastical wealth, that the *monstrous disproportion* may disappear, which places *opulence* on *one side*, and almost *indigence* on the other.

Sometimes there were found men, even among the higher clergy, who appeared to be inspired by the views of the Philosophers, and they thundered from the pulpit, declamations; which shook the very foundations of the court; of one of these preachers the following anecdote is curious:

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IN the Gazette de France, 28th March 1780, is inserted this article of intelligence. "There was no sermon on holy thursday, before the king, for the Abbé d'Espagnac, who was to have preached that day found himself *suddenly* indisposed, at the moment he was stepping into the pulpit, and rendered incapable of delivering his discourse." Such is the account given of this failure of the sermon; but the *secret* fact is contained in the following anecdote. At that moment, an officer came to our abbé and informed him, that as the king knew that he *was not well*, he excused him from performing his duty. The eloquent orator not, at first, understanding the kind anxiety of the king, assured the messenger, that he was very sensible of his majesty's attention, but that he was very well. The officer perceiving the honest simplicity of our abbé, was obliged to explain himself in more direct terms, and leading him to a

Anecdote of an Abbé, who while he is preparing to mount the pulpit, is seized by order of the king.

post chaise, made him return to Paris, and perhaps made our preacher really indisposed.

This abbé was a young man, who had just entered into the career of literature, and sighed for celebrity; for this purpose he broached singular opinions, and bold paradoxes. Having delivered a panegyric of Saint Louis, before the French academy, he had greatly offended the pious part of his auditors by giving the passages which the archbishop of Paris had made him expunge in his MS. He had taken still greater freedoms by his criticisms, and various strictures on the clergy. Monsieur, was the patron of the ecclesiastic party at court; to him they had recourse on this occasion, and he, in consequence, set the king against the Abbé d'Espagnac. Several days before Lent, his majesty said, " We have heard last year a very unchristian sermon (the Abbé Rousseau's) but this year we shall not certainly." This *hint* was gently given to the Abbé, by the courtiers,

courtiers, but he was resolute, in not being intimidated. The archbishop of Paris, and the great almoner, were appointed to examine his sermon before it was preached. They found, that not any part of it turned on the holy mystery of that day, but on a matter most irrelevant, on a *parallel* between *royalty* and *despotism*. Fearful that this might produce a *disagreeable sensation*, they informed the Count of Maurepas, who, as political, as he was malicious, took this facetious method to save himself a direct refusal to the orator, and at the same time to teach him to be silent.

Something of this kind had before happened at the same place, and on the same day, shortly before the death of Louis XV, by the Abbé Beauvais, who was allowed to preach before his Majesty, notwithstanding he addressed himself to the court, in a most uncourtly strain. Our abbé resolved either to get into a bishopric, or into the bastile. He

The Abbé
Beauvais
compares
Louis XV.
to Solomon.

had the courage to thunder from the pulpit against the scandalous life of Louis XV. He characterised his passion for Madame Du Barry, in a strong representation of the manners of king Solomon, the application of which was very obvious. "This monarch (said he) satiated with pleasure, and having experienced every kind of lubricity, which the court could furnish to quicken debilitated appetite, sought out a new species among the vile refuse of public prostitution.' Madame Du Barry knew her own likeness, and moved the king to *punish* him, but with his usual mildness of disposition, he observed, that a preacher cannot always be answerable for the applications which his auditors might make. Madame Du Barry, however, wrote to our abbé, the following letter, in the evening:

The count-
ess Du Bar-
ry threatens
the preacher

Sir, *Holy thursday at night, 1794.*

You have preached a very insolent discourse

courfe to-day. In the room of ufing charity and moderation in your fermon, you had the audacity to reflect upon his majesty's way of life, in the very face of his people; you made your attack upon him only, though you ought to have ufed gentlenefs towards him, and have excufed his frailties to his fubjects. I do not think you were moved by a fpirit of christian charity, but excited by a luft of ambition, and a fondnefs for grandeur; thefe were the motives of your conduct. Was I in his majesty's place, you fhould be banifhed to fome obfcure village, and there taught to be more cautious, and not to endeavour to *raife the people to rebel* againft the ruler God has put over them. I cannot fay what the king may do, but you have prefumed too much upon his goodnefs. You did not expect from me a leffon for your conduct, drawn from the christian doctrine and morality, but I would advife you for your own good to pay attention to it. I am, &c.

The Countefs Du Barry.

THE

The ABLE
Maury
preaches
boldly before
the King.

THE following anecdote also relates to preaching before the king. The Abbé—I beg his eminence's pardon—now the Cardinal Maury (whose immeasurable ambition is now gratified, unless he desires to become Pope) in April 1781, preached before the king (Louis XVI) and aspiring then only at an abbey, attempted to attract his majesty's attention, but seems to have taken the wrong road for royal promotion.

The subject of his sermon was *charity*. He took occasion to make some strictures on hospitals, and according to his custom, (and it is no bad custom) introduced a variety of *anecdotes*, which illustrated his observations. He observed that the *number of foundlings* in Paris, were increasing every day; that in 1780, there were thirteen thousand, of which he said, seven thousand had perished, through the want of proper attention, and good nurses. The king, displeased with this observation, addressed himself to the great almoner

Thirteen
thousand
foundlings
at Paris, in
1780.

almoner, who sent for the preacher, and told him,—“ Monsieur l'abbé, remember that you preach *before* the king, and *to* the king. Be careful not to introduce things in your sermons, that are foreign and only relative to the administration, *of which you, as well as the public, should be ignorant*; and above all, take care at least, that you do not spread false anecdotes.”

Notwithstanding this admonition, our Abbé Maury, with a little more caution, gave way to his feelings, and in a sermon, on *calumny*, quoted profane instances of *ministers* exposed to the *malicious*, and called up on this occasion, the shades of Sully, Colbert, and and without naming him, so forcibly alluded to M. Necker, that the whole object and design of our political preacher was clear. All this greatly displeased the courtiers, who were alike guilty of the horrid sin of calumny.

The abbé afterwards assured his friends,
that

that the king was satisfied of the *truth* of his *anecdote* respecting the *foundlings*. He began now to hope for the bishoprick. Such indeed, was even then, his ambition for ecclesiastical dignities, that he suspended his attempts for a seat in the academy, because it was hinted to him, that bishops were often seen to become academicians but that no academicians ever became a bishop. His rivals were irritated to observe the son of a cobbler of Comtat, aspire to the prime honours of the episcopal body. When they contemplate our illustrious abbé in his red cap, they should at length be taught that *merit* is more valuable than their *parchments*.

I find several scandalous anecdotes relative to bishops. I may be allowed to give one or two; as I propose afterwards to give one, of a most singular kind, for it is an act of heroic benevolence, rare among all persons, but still rarer among bishops.

It is very certain that the higher class of
the

the prelates possessing immoderate incomes, dissipated them, like so many sinful Laics. Although their debauched manners were well known at Paris, the bishops at least endeavoured to conceal them, and to sacrifice any thing rather than to be brought forward as actors on the public stage, by exposing themselves in a court of justice. Madame de Marignan, a lady of greater beauty than fortune, found an admirer in the Sieur Charlot, a Che-

Scandalous
anecdote of
a bishop.

valier of the order of St. Louis. This gentleman having insinuated himself into her good graces, had been too premature, in his affection, so that her indiscretion appeared before the parson had been employed. The lady was obliged to lie in secretly. Charlot from a lover became a traitor, and forsook the fruit of his own planting. She cited him in a court of law. The knight to draw himself out of this intricate affair, declared to the Lieutenant de Police, that he was ready to pay his *share* respecting the child;

but

but that he was far from being the only father, and that he would prove the bishop of Angers had, at least, made a leg or an arm. The bishop informed by the mother of the project of the *Sieur Charlot*, and alarmed at the public notoriety which this might occasion, he took on himself, to silence all parties, the care of the mother, the grand mother, and the little one.

The bishop of Saint Brieux, (who, as he is still living, I shall not give his present title) was supposed to have as great a lubricity as any of his brothers. In one of his amorous pursuits, (and he did not as carefully conceal his amours as others) he pressed a fair lady with a vehemence of passion, but had forgot the usual precaution of locking the door. The husband enters at the unhappiest moment possible; the lady does not lose her sagacity; and feigns that the bishop is attempting to violate her honour. She seizes the sword of her husband, and plunges it in

the thigh of the ravisher. The bishop humiliated, confused, and wounded, retired to his chamber. This was a fashionable topic in 1767; the address of the lady was greatly admired, and the courtiers considered it as a miracle, that a bishop should be wounded in the thigh without injuring his culotte. A bishop wounded by a lady without tearing his cloaths. Louis XV. laughed; but the bishop of Orleans, alarmed at the declining honours of the episcopacy, thought proper to write to the assembly of the clergy that it was a calumny invented by some malicious person. It is said, however, that my Lord yet bears the mark of the wound; like Jacob, who wrestled with a celestial, and not a terrestrial angel.

In 1767, while the reformation of the religious orders was agitated, a satirical and allegorical print, was published, which, because it had great truth, proved most offensive to the higher clergy. It will not be improper to describe this caricatura. An allegorical print of the five arch-bishops. The
five

five archbishops who were for the reformation of these orders, that is, for appropriating and seizing on these revenues for the use of the court, were thus characterised. The archbishop of Rheims, is placed opposite the Romish church, imaged under a female form which is making mouths, or grimaces at him. A courtier is presenting a blue ribbon to the archbishop of Arles, to whom he kneels while the courtier, reaching at the silken honour, the other holds it out of his reach. A hunt of hounds and huntsmen captivates the eye of the archbishop of Narbonne, who is now in England. The archbishop of Toulouse has lying on his table two volumes of the Encyclopedia, open at the words *Celibacy* and *Monks*, subjects on which it is supposed he had written. The archbishop of Bourges is presenting a nosegay, to a smart gay lady, whose meretricious dress sufficiently indicates her trade. On the other side are the monks of the different orders,

orders, represented with all the attributes of penitence, such as hair shirts, crucifixes, &c. in acts of devotion. At the bottom of the whole is the following inscription, “*It is these men who would reform those!*”

This pasquinade would soon have been in every body's hands, had the five bishops not intrigued to stop the sale; but, however, a few copies are preserved by the curious.

The dissolute manners of the French prelates, are now, I presume, sufficiently demonstrated; not less evident are the internal discords existing among the clergy.

BUT I stop to relieve this disagreeable sketch by an anecdote which reflects singular honour on a bishop, who appears to have acted in a manner which a philosopher will consider worthy of a Roman hero, and a Christian, of a primitive apostle.

The heroic
benevolence
of an apostolic
Bishop,

The archbishop of Auch, (who, by the way, was not a literate person, nor a *philosopher*)

G

being

being at Paris in 1781, was present at a dreadful fire, and seeing in the midst of the flames a mother and her child, he offered any one eight hundred, and afterwards twelve hundred livres, to attempt the perilous act of saving them. None ventured. It was then our bishop, transported with a zeal truly apostolical, precipitated himself amidst the flames, and brought forth in his arms these victims! This act of benevolence and civic devotion was for a long time not credited, till it was fully confirmed. It formed a striking contrast to those more philosophical prelates, whose days were dissolved in the luxury and servitude of courts, and who rarely exerted themselves but in levying new taxes on their *Curés*.

WE must now return to the disagreeable contemplation of the dissolute manners of the higher clergy, the following anecdote will serve for this purpose.

One

One De C——, a man of a free Scandalous anecdote, character, and whose extravagancies had been hitherto supplied by the generosity of his wife, irritated that she had refused to give him any more money for his ruinous expences, resolved to expose her to the town-talk. Madame de C——, who had been a mistress of Louis XV. was acquainted with many prelates, through the means of her son, the Abbé de Bourbon, the illegitimate offspring of this monarch. The Abbé Boisgelin was as handsome and nervous a confessor as the most refined female Parisian could desire. One night after supper he had retired with Madame de C—— into her bed chamber; the malicious husband disturbing the confessor and his penitent, broke into the room, and used harsh language to his wife and the Abbé, whom in his passion he attempted to strike. The robust Abbé proved too strong, and felled him with the fire-shovel. Madame de C—— in the mean while, had thrown

open the window, and called the watchman. All this formed a most scandalous scene. The commissary enters; takes down the various depositions; and the next day informs the minister of this noisy affair. M. de Maurepas sends for the Abbé, and reprimands him for being at such an hour tête-a-tête with a pretty woman. The Abbé defends himself, and said that he could not do better than follow the example of such and such prelates whom he named.—The facetious minister replied—Not at all, sir; to do these things, wait till you become a *bishop* yourself.

An Abbé
apologises
for his irre-
gular con-
duct, by that
of several
bishops.

The Abbé Boisgelin was one of those unhappy victims who perished at the Abbaye, on the second of September, 1792. The nation did not think of him till he had the imprudence, to present himself to the committee of his section, to ask for the money the nation owed him for his living: Instead of paying him they reproached him with his aristocracy, but bid him return the next day
to

to be paid. As he was not dull of comprehension, he perceived, that they were more desirous of collecting proofs to imprison him, than money to relieve him. He hid himself in a garret at the Luxembourg, but having been detected, by the visit which the municipal officers made shortly after round Paris, he was then conducted to the Abbaye, where he was massacred. It is said, that he defended himself to the last, and did not die without having first avenged himself on one of his assassins.

A work published in 1782, claims particular attention. It is entitled, "Letters on the actual State of the Clergy, &c." The author aims at re-kindling the expiring zeal for the church, which he says is nearly extinguished in all hearts. In his first, or introductory letter, he deplores the abandonment of religious discipline; even, he says, for children, elements of seduction have been formed, and even in Lent, while the pulpits

A publication on the actual State of the Clergy

resound with groans and reprehensions, every source of voluptuousness remains open. After this lively and energetic picture of the times, he lays all the guilt on the heads of the church, who have forsaken its interests; who vegetate in luxury and inaction; and to those Christian orators, who having become tolerant, are no more than the feeble echoes of those thunders which brought terror and alarm in the hearts of the people.

The Modern
bishops
described.

In his second letter he describes a *modern bishop*. He is a being half holy, half profane, who, concealed under the sacred livery, is in reality a philosophical apostate, whose object is to purge France of all the errors of its government; whose *principle* is, that *the public good is the only religion of a state*. He is not the man of God, the successor of the Ambroses and the Chrysostoms; he is a *ministerial jockey*; a secondary spring which assists the great wheel of politics, and is only zealous
for

for *L'Empyrisme civil*, which, he adds, may be called the *epidemic disease* of the times!

In the following letters he enters into a curious-detail of the chiefs and principal agents of this *revolution*. His portraits drawn with vigour, yet, with a perfect resemblance, shew what characters then presided in the church. All intriguers; men of the world, and of the court. All continually secretly plotting, or publicly propagating opinions which are designed to shew a contempt for received opinions and popular prejudices. All men of the most debauched manners, yet preaching what they call *les grandes Mœurs*. Gamesters, jockies, libertines, petit maitres, and desperadoes.

This little work, in consequence of the freedom of its striking representations, was immediately stopt by the court and the prelates.

THE non-residence of the French clergy, in their dioceses, was not less remarkable,

The non-
residence of
the Bishops
excite the
public in-
dignation.

than among our own. Bishops revelling in every species of voluptuousness, and well known at Paris, were often never seen by any of their distant flock. The murmurs of the public, appear to have reached the throne, for in october, 1784, the following circular letter was addressed by the minister to the bishops. It is not indeed written with spirit or elegance. “ The king having fixed particular attention, Sir, on the importance of your functions, and of the advantages he gathers from your duties, as from that of religion, your edifying conduct, and your daily cares; his majesty orders me to inform you, that he desires, that you would the greater part of the year reside in your diocese, and not quit it without having first obtained his permission. You have given, Sir, too many proofs of your zeal for the king, that his majesty should not be persuaded that you will fully enter into his views with a warmth equal to their justice. The intention of his
majesty

majesty is then, that whenever you are obliged to absent yourself from your diocese, you will first inform me of it, as also of the time that you think your affairs may call you away. It will be alike my duty, and my pleasure, immediately to convey to his majesty your wish, and to inform you of what he shall please to decide."

This circular letter produced several pleasant attempts to ridicule it. The bishops themselves only could consider it as unjust. However long the *first period* may be found to an asthmatic reader, and however ill the whole may be written, no wit can destroy the reasonableness of its object; whether regarded in a political or religious light. But the fact was, that the bishops had too long familiarised themselves to the dissipations, intrigues, and pleasures of Paris, to prefer a residence in their diocese; far from operas, and opera girls. They perhaps were desirous of reforming the modern Babylon by the rectitude
of

The lamentation of a Bishop obliged to quit Paris.

of their conduct, the simplicity of their manners, and the evangelical purity of their lives. But, alas! a French bishop at Babylon, was a mere Babylonian. One of these bishops, who had in the early part of his life, been brought up very distant from the metropolis, in returning to his diocese, in consequence of the king's order, who had censured his residence at Paris of several years, said, "I passed the greater part of my life in desiring to see Paris; I am now going to pass the rest in regretting it's loss." Such were the mundane delights which attracted the meditations of the spiritual pastor!

Among the best satirical pieces which the ministerial letter (which resembles a *lettre de cachet*) produced, is to be distinguished, a petition from the young *Demoiselles* of Paris, to the Baron of Bretueil. It is too long, and indeed improper for the public eye; but the close of this petition of the courtesans is too striking a representation of the manners
of

of the clergy, to be passed over in silence.

It is as follows :

——“ Yes, my Lord, our greatest profits, our most certain revenues, proceed from the clergy. Their wealth is estimated in France, at *one hundred and twenty millions of livres income!*

Petition of
the Parisian
girls not to
banish the
Bishops from
Paris.

Well! The half, perhaps, passes into our hands, which afterwards is continually given to the government by the multitude of its spies and officers, who are unceasingly harassing us. In exiling the bishops from Paris, you immediately stop this circulation, not only that part which proceeds from them, but from their croud of subalterns, and attendants, such as rectors, curates, abbés, clerks, secretaries, agents, and train bearers, of all which, every bishop has at least twenty. There is a general emulation through all the ecclesiastical body both secular and regular, to imitate their bishops. It is not easy to calculate the effects of this emulation, which must now be extinguished

in a remote retirement. The prelates after having gradually accustomed themselves to every species of luxury, will now give themselves up to another passion; to that of avarice, which, when the other ceases, always rules over them, and which, according to Mably, is the most pernicious to the nation.

“ All this considered, your lordship will please, to revoke the letter of exile of the bishops, and suffer them to return to Paris, where they will be infinitely more useful than in their diocese.”

The Clergy
unanimous
in the com-
mon cause.

If the bishops did not aid the cause of religion by their own morality, it is apparent that they were extremely zealous in the common cause. They ever attempted to strengthen their alliance with the government, and informed the court from their pulpits, that religion was the basis of empire. It was thus in June 1772, that the bishop of Treguier, in his sermon, displayed and at-
tacked

tacked the *growing impiety* of France, and the *tolerance* of which, our orator considered as a national crime, since through this mistaken tenderness, at every hour, it was extending its *dreadful progress*, and infecting the whole kingdom.—So far the *true philosopher* may agree with the bishop. But it is rarely in his power to continue with one throughout a *whole* sermon. The cloven foot of worldly fordidness, always peeps out from beneath the purple robes of episcopacy. So it was, at least, with our bishop; for he divided his sermon into two parts. In the first he proves, *that religion does every thing for the state*; and in the second, insinuates, that *the state should do every thing for religion*. This needs no other commentary but that which presents itself to every thinking mind. In some parts of this sermon it appears, that he laid a great stress, with an episcopal haughtiness, on that vile prejudice—the *honour* of a *noble birth*. Such doctrines shew as little good

A Bishop
censures to-
leration,
and proves
the union of
Church and
State.

sense, as they evince morality. A bishop should **now** preach in a very different style to **that** which was used for the good people of the last century. He should recollect that he is addressing himself to an assembly of *men*.

The luxury,
licentious-
ness, and
debts of the
great Al-
moner.

IN 1784, a new subject for the dishonour of the clergy, appeared in the remonstrance of the parliament of Paris, against the Cardinal de Rohan for his mal-administration of the hospital of the *Quinze-Vingts*. This remonstrance is replete with facts so minute, so circumstantiated, and so numerous, and indeed of such public notoriety, that it became an indispensable duty to present his majesty with the horrid picture. These facts are of three kinds. The first concern the despotism of the great almoner; the second, on the deficiencies of his assets, by which it appears that he could not account for a *million* of livres! and the third, prove to what

what an excess of licentiousness that religious house had arrived; in that asylum of penitents, nothing was to be found but scenes of lewdness and horror; nor the church, nor the altar had been spared!

THE intrigues of the clergy furnished Scandalous anecdote. continual matter for the town-talk, and every day produced a saint who acted like a mere heretic. In 1785, the bishop of C—— afforded some mirth to the fashionable circles. This prelate became passionately fond of the wife of a coachman of the Count d'Artois. What an honour for the honest wife of a coachman to receive the embraces of a bishop! How could a catholic fair resist so much love and dignity? The appointments of our lovers were fixed at those hours when the husband was employed in driving the count. It happened, however, that the coachman was informed of their rendezvous, and returning home at an un-

usual hour, forces the door, and discovers my Lord, the bishop, without his pontifical habits. He threatens every thing, and the prelate trembling for his dishonour, grants every thing. The coachman lays his damages at a thousand crowns; and returns with the bishop's draft to his carriage. In the mean time the count had been obliged to make use of another; our coachman implores on his knees his forgiveness; tells the story and produces the note. The count laughs; takes the note, and hastens to amuse the Royal family with the episcopal frailty. The queen laughed; but his Majesty ordered that the sum should be doubled, and exiled the bishop to his diocese.

BUT we leave these scandalous anecdotes in which we have sometimes indulged. The harvest was so plentiful as to invite the sickle oftener than we wished. It is greatly to the honour of the bishop of Amiens a virtuous prelate

prelate, that in 1785, when the court seized every opportunity of rendering itself master over the assembly of the clergy, the bishop opposed it with a resolute perseverance, of which the debauched and servile ecclesiastics of France give such few proofs. The court had contrived to have this assembly composed of those prelates, who were its minions. Of this number they wanted to exclude the worthy bishop of Amiens, who was to untractable for their purpose; but this ecclesiastic refused to consent to the wishes of the minister; he declared it was his turn, and that he would maintain his right. The decision was given in his favour. He then said that he was satisfied in having maintained and made known the right of his seat, and that to prove that he was not guided by any view of ambition or turbulence, he renounced appearing in the assembly. This was very gladly accepted by the court, who replaced him by the bishop of Noyon, who was too complaisant

A bishop
opposes the
Court; gains
his right,
and yields it.

not to receive all its instructions. If the bishop of Amiens is to be applauded for his manly conduct in asserting his right, he is to be censured for not occupying his place, with the same dignity he had obtained it. But he well knew that to combat with the court was to fight with a Hydra, whose heads he could never diminish, but who probably might have done some injury to his own.

The Court
uses mean
subterfuges
to humour
the clergy.

BUT if these assemblies of the clergy were generally composed of the creatures of the court, they, in their turn, were to be indulged in certain matters. It was thus in 1785, that a decree of the King's council, dated the third of June, suppresses the new edition (that of Beaumarchais) of the complete works of Voltaire. This was a gratification given as a *douceur* to the clergy, who, at this moment, were assembled to make their usual gift to the king. But to what amounted this illusive gratification? Beaumarchais had
already

already been permitted publicly to sell all his copies above three months anterior to the edict; yet it was published with all possible parade. Two copies were pasted at the door of Beaumarchais. The suppression is said to be made because a part of these works is inimical to religion and morals; and tending to shake the foundation of order, society, and all legitimate authority. All printers, booksellers, distributors, &c. are commanded to bring their copies to the government.—But the edition had been already sold! New efforts were, however, made by the archbishop of Aix and others, to suppress this edition: In their remonstrance they say, that they saw with grief the editor industriously multiplying editions at a low price, that every class of society might purchase them, so that none can escape corruption. Another edict was sent forth in consequence. Beaumarchais had then received a considerable number of copies; but the farce was so well acted, that

before the police examined his warehouses, they gave him notice of their intended visit several days before they came! To such mean subterfuges did the court submit itself to preserve and humour the friendship and aid of the ecclesiastical power.

The persecuted Protestants one of the causes of the persecution of the Clergy.

Among the many important causes which produced the revolution, is to be numbered that of the persecuted Protestants, and the continual attempts of the clergy to oppress, or rather to *annihilate* the race. In France, the protestants (as in England the dissenters) were deprived of their privileges; and a marriage between a protestant and a catholic, did not hold good. Often did the papal thunder resound from the pulpit. In 1785, a preacher at Paris strongly exhorted the good people of France to constrain their protestant fellow citizens to educate their children in the catholic religion; by this means, observed the furious prelate, the future generation will be

be *purified*, and the *whole race* will be finally *extinguished*. This fanatic, (can it be credited?) made friends by this dreadful exhortation, among a part of the clergy. Such maxims were, however, the last struggles of the expiring ecclesiastical faction of France. The *Protestants* have greatly contributed towards the revolution and it is them, perhaps, who, under the protection of Necker, himself a protestant and their patron, who have been the secret springs of that treatment which the catholic clergy have received.

It must also be remembered, that the *higher* class of the *clergy* oppressed the *lower*. These, consisting of an army of *Curés* and *Vicaires*, had a great ascendancy over the minds of the *people*; and it is but natural to suppose that the oppressed would not speak favourably of their oppressors. There is no doubt that the archbishops, the bishops, and the cardinals, were painted in their true

The lower clergy inimical to the higher.

colours; and that their indigent agents did not see without indignation, the lazy opulence and unevangelical voluptuousness of their lords. They procured all the publications at Paris against them, and industriously communicated and explained them to their parishioners. Necker was so strongly persuaded of the power which the *lower clergy* possessed over the *people*, that he said, when in place, "It is with the *lower clergy* that I will humiliate these *cardinals* and *archbishops*, and will reduce them to what they were in the *primitive church*." He never renounced this project; and this project has been fully accomplished!

Necker's
observation
on the lower
Clergy.

The following anecdotes and observations close this article with propriety. They bring forward the respectable ministers of religion. Two of the anecdotes we have already noticed; but as they are given in rather a different manner it will not be improper to present them here as we received them.

The

The French bishops during the close of the reign of Louis XV. and the whole of that of Louis XVI. were divided into administrative and evangelical bishops.

Of the
French bi-
shops.

The former were such as without any right busied themselves in the management of the kingdom and its finances; these meddling prelates always absent from their dioceses, commonly resided in the metropolis; crowded in the anti-chambers of ministers, cringed in the gallery of Versailles, and entered into all the intrigues of courtiers. These bishops caballed to obtain the richest benefices, they wasted in pleasures, the patrimony of the church and the poor, abandoning the care of their districts to subaltern hands, and imperiously prescribed to their clergy the laws of residence, which themselves infringed in so scandalous a manner. At their head we must place the cardinal Lomenie, who was all his life ambitious of the administration of affairs, and when he obtained it, not only displayed

a perfect ignorance of all government, but hastened still more the fall of that of France, by completing the disorder of its finances.

Anecdotes
and charac-
ters of evan-
gelical bi-
shops.

The latter were religious Pontiffs, constant residents in their dioceses, daily occupied in upholding religion and manners, by their lessons and their example. The number of these was extremely small; amongst them we may distinguish, M. Beaumont, archbishop of Paris, M. De Herc , bishop of St. Dol, M. de la Marche, bishop of St. Pol de Leon, (whose virtues England at present admires) and M. de Machaut, bishop of Amiens. This last had succeeded in that see, M. de la Motte d'Orleans, who shone in the Gallican church, in the latter years of Louis XV. and of whom, therefore, we shall relate some anecdotes.

M. de la Motte d'Orleans, was a prelate of the most distinguished merit, and the most exemplary life. Vice itself did homage to his virtues. When the concerns of the French

Clergy called him to Paris, he was accustomed to visit the king at Versailles. Louis XV. and the Dauphin his son, when they heard he was in the antichamber, would come and seek him out in the throng of courtiers, and lead him into their apartment. After their conversation, which the princes prolonged as much as possible, the king himself would reconduct the prelate, and used to say, embracing him when he took leave; pray God for me,

bishop, for you are a saint on earth. To a piety truly angelick, and austere manners, this good prelate joined a gaiety of mind and amenity of character, which won him all hearts.

The ingenious stragem of a good humour'd prelate; to obtain money for his poor, at a ball.

One day his purse, which was truly that of the poor, being exhausted, he learnt, that the Intendant of Amiens, was to give a superb ball to the ladies of the city, his industrious charity availed itself of that circumstance to replenish it. Instead of retiring to rest, at ten o'clock in the evening, he orders the horses to his carriage, gets into it, and bids his ser-

vants

vants drive to the hotel of the Intendant. The ball was commenced when the bishop arrived, at his sight the women, all superbly dressed, fled on all sides, to different parts of the hotel. To stop this disarrangement, the Intendant intreated the bishop to step into another apartment, to settle the matters which brought him there. I have no business to treat on, says the good man, I am eighty years of age, and have never seen a ball; I am come therefore to yours; so I beg you will reassemble the ladies. The dispersed and astonished troop are collected with trouble. At last they surround the bishop, his gaiety encourages them, he is invited to dance: You dance ladies, says he, and I rejoice at it, but in the mean while, my poor are without bread, and drowned in tears. It is for those who divert themselves, to dry up their griefs; behold their purse, says the worthy bishop, you see it is empty. We will fill it, my lord, reply the ladies, but on condition that
you

you dance. Willingly cries the prelate. The collection goes round, and the subscriptions were considerable: the bishop is summoned to the dance. It is true, says he, that I have promised, but I forgot to tell you, that there are two days in the week that I cannot dance, let me see what day are we. Tuesday, my lord. Sure, I am very sorry, but that is precisely one of my excepted days, I must therefore put off my engagement, but pursue yours, and I wish you good night.

There was commonly a company of the king's body guards at Amiens. One of them laid a wager, that he would swallow a half-crown, and did so; but he fell seriously ill. The faculty could not succeed in making him bring forth the piece, and somebody mentioned the matter to the bishop of Amiens. They do not know, says he, the means to cure him, but I could tell them an excellent one; let them send the foldier to the Abbé Terrai,

I

(then

(then minister of finances) he knows how to get out money from every where.

Curious anecdote of a Bishop satirizing the bishops.

He was at Paris, when Madame Louisa of France, was made a Carmelite. He went to visit that princess, who had just renounced all the pleasures of the court, to bury herself in solitude. The parlour was full of bishops and nuns. M. d'Amiens, placed himself in a corner of the apartment, making observations and saying nothing, and was some time unnoticed. The princess perceived him, and asked the prelate, why he took no part in the conversation. I ask pardon, madam, returned he, but I was dreaming. Dreaming, returns the princess, do me the favour, I entreat, to communicate your dream. The bishop, after some intreaty, complies. I dreamt, madame, says he, that I was at the Gate of Heaven, St. Peter was inside, with his keys, and I without, observing those who applied for admission. The first who presented himself, was a Carmelite, and Peter let him

him in without saying any thing. A second came and passed the same; a third came, and Peter let him enter, but appeared tired; at length a fourth arrived, my God, says Peter, we see none but those fellows; pass on. I thank you, said the princess, for so adroit a compliment, but continue to detail the sequel. The prelate resisted sometime, but his brethren, the bishops, pressing him equally to proceed, well says the prelate, I next saw a bishop arrive; the company all asked him eagerly what St. Peter said. He said, replied he, that on account of the rarity of the case, the folding doors should be opened; but ask me no more, for I was myself, so astonished, that surprise awakened me. The poignancy of the lesson is as obvious as the compliment.

It is a disgusting prejudice, worthy remark, in the French church, that the bishops were persuaded, that the episcopal seats, and the rich abbeys, ought to be the exclusive property of noble ecclesiasticks. The govern-
ment

ment, which required in an officer of a regiment, proofs of four degrees of nobility, seemed to think like the higher clergy, with respect to the great benefices. The nobility, but more particularly the nobles of the court, could alone obtain them. The court rarely deviated from this rule, and if we except some undignified ecclesiasticks, who preached with éclat in the chapel of Versailles, and were recompenced by scanty bishopricks or abbeys,

Nobility the
sole title to
ecclesiastical
preferment.

we may say that nobility was the indispensable, and almost the sole title to the great benefices. Those who were happy enough to form exceptions, were not even well looked on by the noble prelates, who gave them the indecent title of *bishops of fortune*, as in a regiment they stile *officers of fortune*, those who by their merit had obtained the dignity of Knights of St. Louis. They even frequently, nay very frequently, formed cabals to depreciate in the king's mind, the merit of an undignified ecclesiastick, in order

to deprive him of the benevolence of the monarch. When the Abbé de Beauvais, a simple priest of Cherbourg, preached at Versailles, in the Lent of the year that Louis XV. died, he thundered with energetick force, against the corrupt lives of the great, and particularly of courtiers; he represented to the king, corruption propagating itself from his court into the provinces, infecting the present generation, and presaging to the future, the evils it now experiences. He did more; with that courage and freedom, which the sanctity of his office inspired, he ventured to display Louis XV. to Louis XV. himself, when he painted to him the glory of Solomon's reign, so long as he continued wise, and the degradation into which he fell, when women had corrupted his heart. This holy audacity made all those, who were interested in the continuance of these disorders, tremble, All the court leagued against the orator; the favourite Sultana, who dreaded the flight of her

her royal lover, put herself at the head of the cabal; the king alone held out, and defending the preacher, by saying, he had performed his duty, conferred on him the bishoprick of Senez.

L' Abbé Maury preached with the same energy before Louis XVI. To prove the reigning corruption, he asserted in the pulpit, that thirteen thousand bastards, were born that year in the metropolis; the king was assured that the calculation was exaggerated; the Abbé Maury proved minutely the justness of his calculation, but Louis XVI. never knew firmness, and accordingly the Abbé Maury was not a bishop.

If truth was unpleasant to the courtiers, it was not less so to the greater part of the French Bishops. In 1775, the clergy being assembled at Paris, the Abbé Maury was appointed to pronounce before the bishops, the elogium of St. Augustine. The plan was vast, and the matter abundant, but delicate. The
preacher

preacher setting aside all respect for men, gave a spring to his genius, and painting with the pencil of truth, he boldly traced in the life of his saint, what the church has a right to require from a bishop, and what a bishop has a right to expect from the church. The lively and energetic strokes of the Abbé Maury, developed the immense duties of the episcopacy, and the glory acquired by him who has worthily accomplished its functions. The whole audience was enchanted with the manly and courageous eloquence of the orator. The prelates alone were discontented. They, doubtless, dreaded the parallel which any one might form of their lives, with that of St. Augustine, and the infinite distance which must naturally be found between their conduct and that of the bishop of Hippone. In short, except the archbishop of Paris and the bishop of Senes, they all refused to see the Abbé Maury after the sermon.

The Bishops
offended by
a parallel
drawn of
their lives
with St. Au-
gustine.

This orator so highly distinguished in the

I

constituent

constituent assembly, deserves that we should here mention, that when he began to shine with so much eclat in that assembly, the archbishop of Bourdeaux, then minister of justice, wished to make him accept a mitre. No, replied Maury, I shall not accept the king's nomination, I must speak the truth, and that with courage; and, therefore, I must have no bishopric, unless you would have it said, that I have been gained over by the king, and, consequently, the value of whatever I may deliver be under-rated.

The ecclesiastical reforms strenuously demanded by the prelates only to augment their own revenues.

Another abuse of the high clergy of France, was their rage to overturn the Abbeyes, or other religious communities, not perceiving that it was the height of impolicy to engage the government to touch one part of the edifice, and by that very means teach it that since power reached to the overthrow of one portion, it could equally destroy the whole. Yet had these reforms been demanded by the prelates, with a view of public utility, we

might have applauded their zeal, but the greater part called for the suppression of certain Abbeys, only to add their revenues to their fees, or, perhaps, to their chapters. Others again did not suppress the Abbeys, but drove out the monks to make room for cannoneesses. There was during the reign of Louis XVI. a general madness of dislodging men from the convents to replace them with women: The queen and princes had busied themselves much in multiplying these gallant establishments; for it must not be supposed that these cannoneesses were obliged to lead a solitary and conventual life; they lived in the world, dressed as other women, and were only distinguished from them by a superb cordon, which they wore as a scarf, and a cross either of gold or enamel. This decoration, at once simple and noble, flattered their pride the more, as it was a public mark of the nobility of their origin, for by another abuse, admission

into these female chapters was refused to all those who were not noble.

Here we must add, that M. de Beaumont, archbishop of Paris, would never consent to these innovations, and resisted Louis XV. many times when that prince sought to introduce them in his diocese: The archbishop of Rouen, and the bishop of Coutance, permitted them; but solely where they turned to the advantage of the poor, or of public education.

The bishop
of Autun.

A bishop, of whom we must say a word, is the famous bishop d'Autun. If birth formed a title to episcopacy, no one could claim it with more right, nevertheless, whether it be that the unhappy Louis XVI. foresaw the evils which he would occasion in the state, or that he did not wish to introduce into his higher clergy, an intriguing being whose chief merit consisted in an acquaintance with the stock jobbing of the *Rue Vivienne*, he refused a long while to nominate him, but the see of
Antun

Autun becoming vacant, the king was again persecuted, it was represented to him that the seat in question, required a man acquainted with finances, because the bishop there, was of right president of the states of Burgundy, and the king gave a reluctant consent. We have seen the part which this prelate acted in the constituent assembly. His intimacy with Mirabeau, whom he attended at his death, proves the delicacy of his morals, and as he was the only bishop who, in the assembly, opposed the catholic religion's being declared the religion of the state, by this we may judge of his.

This prelate took the civic oath, and consecrated the first bishop *intrus*; it is reported in Paris, that he received 100,000 crowns for each of these operations; but these are accusations to which his well known avidity for money may have given currency and from which time alone can draw the veil which still conceals from us a multitude of dark manœuvres.

Concluding
observation
on the french
clergy.

In a word, it appears that *one part* of the French ecclesiastics were more corrupted than any branch of the government. Those who composed this party enjoyed enormous revenues, which they dissipated in a lazy and effeminate opulence, and were uniformly the antipodes of decency and morality. At court intriguers; at Paris libertines; and in their dioceses, despots.

THE COURT.

THE Court of France, during the long reign of Louis XV. became a theatre of the most refined intrigue and fantastical levity. The French nobility formerly had been distinguished by their sensibility of honour, and the elevation of their sentiments. If the character of a Sir Charles Grandison, was to have been sought for among persons of an exalted rank, the curious enquirer into human nature, might, perhaps, have found a semblance of the ideal excellence, among these polished, and brave courtiers. It was the *Regent*, who in the short space of about seven years, overwhelmed

Introductory
observations on the
French court

whelmed the nation with a sudden destruction of its wealth and morals. It was him who introduced the depravity, and cupidity which pervaded all ranks; and, like a subtle poison, corrupting the heart of the nation, dispersed itself through all its veins. The Regent himself, indulging the most violent passions, was not to be restrained by the confines of reason and decency, and the well known system of the adventurer Law, by him patronised and introduced, not only brought on a temporary ruin, but gave the nation a propensity for commercial jobbing, of a nature the most pernicious to their morals. A satirist bitterly called the *mother* of the *regent*, IDLENESS; that is

The adven-
turers

The feeble and voluptuous dispositions of the *mother* of all vices.

Louis XV. perfected the national depravity. Luxury, effeminacy, and servility, were now the characteristics of the courtiers; and the mephitic air of COURT-FAVORITISM, was fatal to the few who appeared jealous of the glory of their ancestors, by inheriting their

merits at the cost of incurring ridicule. The French nobility lost that delicate sense of honour which is the source of the purest manners. That sensibility had departed, which regarded a blot in their reputation like death; and the splendid sycophant, like the leopard, looked on his blackest spots with an exulting pride. The two great aims of the modern courtiers of France, like some of another nation, were dissipation, and the means of repairing that dissipation. To obtain the first, they pursued her through all the fantastical labyrinth of versatile folly; and to accomplish the latter, they startled at no depravity and corruption, which presented itself.

The following anecdotes will afford a faithful, and perhaps a striking representation of the French court during the last thirty years.

Ruinous
magnifi-
cence of the
Court.

The first object which offers itself, is the established luxury of all the princes of the blood, which displayed a magnificence gratifying to the vanity and levity of the French nation,

nation, in its days of thoughtlessness and servitude; but at length found to be ruinous to the finances, and a source of corruption and despotism, it is contemplated with indignation. The palaces of the brothers of the king, cost enormous sums, without considering those extraordinary establishments which the monarch was frequently obliged to add. Versailles offered the appearance of the residence of several sovereigns; a palace for the king; another for the queen; and two others for Monsieur, and the Count d'Artois. These two last, had the same military establishment as their majesties. Where in all Europe was a more destructive luxury to be seen? An additional weight of grandeur, was also laid on the nation, at the birth of a Dauphin. At the moment the royal infant was born, a similar establishment was immediately given to him, and the puling child in his cradle, was surrounded by all the splendid appendages of monarchy. It was thus that the kings of
France,

France, even in their cradles, became the scourge of their subjects. But the birth of a Dauphin, once communicated a rapturous enthusiasm throughout the nation, as if they were fearful, that a monarch would be wanting to their throne!

We shall now enter into an anecdotal detail, which perhaps can not be paralleled in the annals of frivolity.

IN the summer of 1775, the queen being dressed, in a brown lutestring, the king good humouredly observed, it was "*couleur de puce*," the colour of fleas; and instantly every lady would be dressed in a lutestring of a flea colour. The mania was caught by the men; and the dyers in vain exhausted themselves, to supply the hourly demand. They distinguished between, an old and a young flea, and they subdivided even the shades of the body of this insect; the belly, the back, the thigh, and the head, were all marked by varying shades

Singular frivolity of the
adulative
courtiers.

shades of this colour. This prevailing tint, promised to be the fashion of the winter. The venders of silk, found that it would be pernicious to their trade; they therefore presented new sattins to her majesty, who having chosen one of a grey ash-colour, Monsieur, exclaimed that it was the *colour* of her *majesty's hair*! Immediately the *fleas* ceased to be favourites, and all were eager to be dressed in the colour of her *majesty's hair*. Servants were sent off at the moment, from Fontainebleau to Paris, to purchase velvets, rateens, and cloths of this colour. The current price in the morning had been forty livres per ell, and it rose towards the evening to the price of eighty to ninety livres! This anecdote, frivolous in appearance, proves that if the *French king*, then had better views and more good sense than his predecessor, the court was still the same as under Louis XV. little, trifling, and volatile.

Such was the continued demand, that some
of

of her *majesty's* hair was actually obtained by bribery, and sent to the Gobelins, to Lyons, and other manufactories, that the exact shade might be caught.

In 1775, the duke of B——n, appears to have carried every species of luxury to an enormous excess. An opera dancer, Made-
The Duke of B——n banished by Louis XVI. for his extravagancies
 moiselle la Guerre, was the Venus, whose chains our duke exulted to wear in the most public and most shameful manner. He spent on this woman 800,000 livres. Louis XVI. being informed of this “Luxe de putanisme,” shewed him not only his marked disapprobation, but ordered him to retire to his estate in N——e. What was still more provoking, after our opera dancer had quitted him with the coolest ingratitude, the excuse which the duke made to the king, was, that as he had no hopes of a heir, and as he had a deadly hatred to the Count de la T——r d’ A——e, who one day must inherit his fortune, he knew no other mode of vexing this gentleman. It
 was

was said, and is most probable, that the chief motive of the royal reprimand, was an indecent comparison between the queen and the opera dancer, of which her majesty had been kindly informed.

Curious epitaph on a dissolute young nobleman.

THE heir of the duke of Penthièvre, and the only son of this branch of the Bourbons, died 1764, a victim to his debaucheries, and particularly to Mademoiselle *Miré*, a musical lady, and celebrated courtesan. The Parisian wits who laughed at every thing, made the following very ingenious epitaph, composed of *five musical notes*, which are supposed to be *engraven* on his tomb.

MI RE LA MI LA.

Miré has placed him there.

WHEN the minister was employed on various suppressions to the detriment of certain nobles who enjoyed these rights, the
marquis

marquis de Gironde, a considerable pensioner and loser on this occasion, addressed himself in a very warm manner to Turgot, and said, that he had placed too blind a confidence in those who surrounded him, and having expressed himself with singular rage against those *Economists*, who acting under him, were for ruining the just rights of the nobility; one of Turgot's confidants irritated, interrupted him, by observing, that in reflecting on the agents of the comptroller, he attacked the comptroller himself, and the king who had chosen him. Our turbulent lord inquired who it was that spoke. It was La Croix; a great stickler for the Economists. Give me my cane, replied the marquis, that I may massacre this fellow, and liberate France from a rascal, who is for overturning and troubling the peace of the nation.—This was in 1776. What would the marquis have said in 1794?

A nobleman
wants to
massacre an
Economist.

ABOUT this time (1776) there prevailed a
great

English
horseracing
in fashion.

great passion for horse racing. It was the Anglomania. Great bets were depending at every course, and the noblemen turned jockies, and rode their own racers. When the count de Lauragais, a dissipated young nobleman, appeared at court after a long residence in England, the king coldly inquired, where he had been for some time?—In England, the count replied—What did you do there? I learnt there, please your majesty, to *think*—of *horses*, retorted the king.

The nation, indeed, frivolous as they were, saw with indignation the behaviour of the duke de Chartres, (Egalité) and the count d'Artois. These princes not only associated with their grooms, and entered into all those scandalous combinations which this species of gaming offers, but treated the people at the courses with the most ineffable contempt and savage ferocity. With singular activity they used their whips on the spectators as well as on their horses; and not only encouraged the
officers

officers to persecute the crowd, but employed such grossness of speech and offensive oaths, that shewed these princes were not unskilled in the language of the vilest part of the nation. It was an edifying spectacle to see the duke of Lauzern running against M. de Fenelon; the last fell from his horse, broke his arm, and lost his wager. The same gentleman betted with another nobleman, who could reach Versailles and return to Paris the quickest in a single horse chaise. The horse of the first died at Seve, and the other expired in the stable at Paris, a few hours after his return.

THESE frivolous, and debauched courtiers, Pedestrian
races among
Noblemen. not satisfied with exercising their inhumanity on their horses, exposed themselves to the derision of Paris by other kinds of races. The duke de Chartres, the duke de Lauzun, and the marquis of Fitzjames, betted five hundred louis who could first reach Versailles on foot. Lauzun gave up the foot-race about half-way;

K

Chartres

Chartres about two-thirds. Fitzjames arrived in an exhausted state, and was saluted as conqueror by the count d' Artois. He, however, like a hero, nearly expiring in the arms of victory, called for a bed, and was immediately let blood, and got his wager, and an asthma. It was in this manner the princes of the blood, the descendents of Henry the Great, passed their days, and it was thus they gave to a despairing and oppressed people, those hopes of prosperity and amendment which now became at every hour necessary to sustain their exhausted misery, and to still their frequent murmurs.

As Racing.

We observe afterwards, that not satisfied with horse and foot racing, by the courtiers, the queen had others by *asses*. She animated by her presence, the countrymen in the neighbourhood, and the winner had for his reward, three hundred livres and a golden thistle; allusive to the plant to which *asses* are partial.

MADAME

MADAME GOURDAN, nicknamed the little Countess, was the Mother Windsor of Paris. This venerable abbess, in 1778, to the astonishment of her creditors, became a bankrupt. She proved by the most regular accounts possible, that her outstanding debts doubled the money she owed. At the meeting of her creditors she addressed them in a strain of the most natural eloquence, and the sensibility of female tears, which melted on her withered cheeks. She said, she had long rendered herself essential to the pleasures of the metropolis; and had passed her life in the service of the public; but that she had now fallen a victim to her own generosity. Of the *public* she did not complain, for they had rewarded her maternal assiduity; but it was to the *courtiers* she owed her ruin. They had persuaded her to enlarge expences; to encrease her establishment; and to depend on their protection. She shewed that various noblemen were in-

Madame
Gourdan the
mother
Windsor of
Paris. be-
comes a
bankrupt.

debted to her in the sum of three hundred and eighty thousand livres !

While this was a prevalent topic of conversation, another bankruptcy took place, not less singular. The college of Duplessis declared itself in a state of bankruptcy. It proved a balance in its favour, if the outstanding debts had been paid. These debts were owing from several noble families for the *education* of their *children, fathers*, and even *grandfathers*, who had all been brought up in that seminary, but had not yet paid their salaries.

What a dissolute nobility! they neither paid their preceptors nor their bawds !

A Philippic
against the
Duke De
Fitzjames.

THE duke de Fitzjames, as his name discovers, was descended from that family, which emigrated with James II. In the following verses, energetic and bold, is given his character, which will be acceptable to some of our readers. This duke had long tyrannised over the parliaments, and had
ever

ever shewn himself a worthy minion of *court favouritism*. He often attempted to hinder them from addressing their remonstrances to the throne. Their addresses, indeed, were always bold, and written in such a manner as to awaken from his dream the most voluptuous and lazy prince.

Fils indigne du sang qui t'a donné naissance,
Proscrit de ta patrie, adopté par la France,
Ministre détesté d'un monarque cheri,
Cesse de déchirer le sein qui t'a nourri!
Contre l'autorité du plus juste des princes,
Toi seul aurois déjà soulevé les provinces,
Si du cœur des François ta farouche fierté;
Eut pu bannir le zélé et la fidélité,
Odieux étranger ! apprends à te connoître ?
Louis seul, a le droit de leur parler en maître,
Dociles à sa voix, redoublant leurs efforts,
Ils prodiguent pour lui leur sang et leurs trésors,
Lors que des publicains l'avidité cruelle,
Impose sous son nom quelque charge nouvelle,
Père tendre, il permer la plainte à ses enfans,
Il écoute les cris des peuples gémissans ;
De sages magistrats sans blesser la puissance,
Des François épuisés lui peignent l'indigence :
Sensible à leurs douleurs, attendri par leurs maux,
Il adoucit pour eux le fardeau des impôts.

2

Mais quand des vils flatteurs l'effaim qui l'environne,
 Ose a la verité, fermer l'accès du thrône;
 Quand la France apperçoit, pour la premiere fois,
 L'appareil militaire a la place des loix;
 Le soldat éffréné, d'une main temeraire,
 De Themis profaner l'auguste sanctuaire;
 Et mettre dans les fers, par un lache attentat,
 Les défenseurs du peuple et l'espoir de l'état!
 Le plus soumis sujet et s'indigne et s'enflamme;
 Contre les vils auteurs d'une coupable trame.
 Tremble ingrat! le courroux d'un prince genereux
 Sera le juste prix de tes exploits honteux;
 Tu seras a jamais par ta fiere impudence,
 La fable de l'Europe et l'horreur de la France!
 Le juste détésespoir de ce peuple aux abois
 Armera contre toi le bras du roi des rois.
 Rappelle des Stuarts la déplorable histoire;
 Vertueux, l'échaffaut ne ternit pas leur gloire,
 Barbare, ils t'ont tracé ce funeste chemin;
 Indigne de leur nom redoute leur destin!

O son unworthy of thy honoured birth.
 Thy country's outcast, though by France received,
 Detested minister of a king so dear,
 Ah! cease to tear the breast that cherishes!
 Against the authority of a prince so just
 Already hadst thou raised his provinces,
 If from the Gallic heart, thy savage pride,
 Could wrest its zeal, and its fidelity.
 Cease odious stranger! learn to know thyself;
 Louis alone shall dare to be their master:
 And docile at his voice, their efforts double,
 Still proud to lavish all their blood and treasures.

When

When oft the publicans with cruel thirst,
Beneath his name impose some novel tax;
He, tender father, still permits his children,
To breathe their sorrows to his royal ear;
And oft he hears the groaning people's cries;
Wise magistrates, who yet respect his power,
Of France exhausted paint the indigence.
He feels their griefs, he softens at their ills,
And makes more light, the nation's imposts dire.
But when vile flatterers, like the swarm that now
Dare close the throne against the approach of truth,
When France now first indignantly beholds
The military pomp take place of law;
The furious foldier with a daring hand,
Profane the holy altar raised to Themis
And load with irons, (cowardly attempt!)
The people's counsel, and the nation's hope!
The meanest subject burns with indignation,
And would destroy the authors of the crime.
Ungrateful, tremble! know thy generous prince,
Shall hurl his rage to crown thy shameful deeds.
Yes, thou shalt be supreme in savage pride,
The scorn of Europe, and of France the horror.
Know an oppressed people's just despair,
Shall rouse the thunder of the King of Kings.
Think of the dreadful story of thy Stuarts,
Virtuous, the scaffold could not blot their glory,
Barbarian, they have traced this path for thee,
Unworthy of their name, yet dread their fate.

Anecdotes of
the Duke of
Richelieu.

THE marechal duke de Richelieu, was another rotten vine in the court vineyard. The latter part of his days was consumed in a law suit which lasted for several years, with a Madame de St. Vincent, with whom he had formed a close connection, and having given her notes to a considerable amount, refused their payment, alledging that they were forged. The unfortunate lady had more than once gained her cause, but the decisions of the courts were always annulled by the intrigues of the duke. She at length perished, a victim to her protracted suit; and the sensibility of her ancient lover was gratified, not only by not paying his notes, but by breaking the heart of his fair adversary. This suit, however, proved nearly ruinous to him; for he had not merely to undergo the usual expences, but to give considerable sums for the corruption of his venal judges. While he was thus employed, a Madame de Gaya, to indulge a barbarous vanity, reduced her family

family to a state of poverty, to make the duke her general legatee. She left him about 150,000 livres. The attorney came to Paris to acquaint him of his new acquisition. After a long attendance in the antichamber, our country attorney wearied, sent a message to the duke, that he had something to communicate of a most interesting nature. On this he was introduced, and a few words eloquently explained his business. The old duke received the intelligence with great coolness, and facetiously observed, that if all the women with whom he had an amour had left him their fortune, he should be richer than the king.

The legitimate heir afterwards attempted to have the will set aside; as an act of insanity, injustice, and puerile vanity. Many thought that the *duke* himself would be the first to agree to this. But the duke persisted in its execution. The counsellor of his adversary exposed with eloquence and force
this

this unjust act, and attempted to make the duke *blush* for his vain and fordid cupidity. But the duke only *laughed* and persisted. It was in vain to plead.

What a horrid recapitulation of his crimes and excesses of all kinds am I going to transcribe!

In 1777, the unhappy madame de St. Vincent presented a petition to the parliament of a most important nature, since it amply displays the dreadful abuse of power of which these courtiers availed themselves.

She petitions the court of peers, to declare all the proceedings and pursuits at law of the marechal, to be annulled, as vexatious, extortive, and injurious to the authority of the court, the laws of the kingdom, the freedom of the citizens, the safety of families and public order. She petitions a prohibition for the duke's further relapse, in shewing a contempt of justice, an abuse of power, a licence of making nocturnal and military incursions

incursions in monasteries, private houses; searching the pockets, desks, and closets of individuals; pillaging, carrying away, and suppressing their letters and papers; intercepting others, confining persons to their own houses, and concealing others in remote prisons; and all this without any legal form whatever; without the slightest proofs of their guilt, but on the contrary, while the temerity of his accusations are evidently proved; as also of bribing witnesses, who depose against him, persecuting them by criminal charges, threatening and changing into witnesses those of the accused, whom his officers corrupt by promises, and suborn by money, &c.

The duke with such licentious manners displayed also in his very advanced age, a singular effeminated foppery, and with all that polished wit which a courtier, who had lived under three monarchs, can alone, perhaps, attain.

attain. The following two anecdotes exhibit this part of his character.

In 1780, the fashionable folly consisted in wearing two watches. A watch, is not so much an object of luxury, as of utility; but the frivolous Parisians, whose only object was a ruinous magnificence, would have two, and ornamented with diamonds to an extravagant amount. The duke of Richelieu was one of those veterans of foppishness, thus admirably described by Gresset: The poet felicitates himself that he is,

Loin de tout importun Jaseur,
 Et des hauts tons de la grandeur;
 Loin de ces troupes doucereuses,
 Où d'insipides precieuses,
 Et de petits fats ignorans
 Viennent, conduits par la folie,
 S'ennuyer en ceremonie,
 Et s'endormir en complimens.

This fashionable octogenarian, did not fail to adopt this modish elegance. One day as he was dressing, and his two watches
 flaming

flaming with brilliant stones, were laid on his table, a court adulator, intreated permission to admire and compare them in his own hands; this awkward flatterer dropt one, and in attempting to recover it, let fall the other; both the brilliant and fragile trifles were on the ground. Ashamed at his *mal-adroitness*, he forms a thousand apologies to the duke, who without being at all disconcerted, said, don't despair, I never yet saw them *go so well together*.

Among several of his bon mots, the following one is remarkable for displaying the genius of the times. Louis XVI. was felicitating him on the recovery of his health; for (said the king) you are not young; you have seen three ages. Rather (replied the duke) three reigns.—Well, and what do you think of them?—Sire (was the duke's remarkable answer) under Louis XIV. nobody dared to say a word; under Louis XV. they spoke in
whispers

whispers; under your majesty's they speak loudly.

Of the young
nobility.

IF such were the old, the young nobility it may be reasonably concluded, did not less participate in the wantonness, frivolity and unreflecting dispositions of the court. The following circumstance will convince us that a general relaxation of decency had taken place in the manners of the courtiers. Their luxury was too often accompanied with insolence; and every day produced some new circumstance to irritate and disgust the populace. It is proper to remind the English reader, that when a person is dying, they send in catholic countries for a minister, to give the dying man the Eucharist and extreme unction. The custom in most parishes, was to precede the host by another priest, who rung a little bell to announce to passengers to make room, and to kneel. In 1780, the following anecdote made a great noise. The Prince

de L——sc (whose name does not honourably occur in the history of the Revolution) with several noblemen and ladies, was returning from the country in the evening, in a coach and six. As they passed the Rue St. Antoine, the host was going to a dying person. The postillion stopt his horses, but the coachman, encouraged by the prince and his noble companions, whipped them, and dispersed the holy retinue. The priest, whose office was to ring the bell, was an old feeble man, who had that day, paid fourteen similar visits, and was soon overturned and wounded. This was a subject of loud mirth for the gay young courtiers. The populace burning with indignation at this public offence of decency and humanity, pursued the coach, and would certainly have avenged the injury; the prince only escaped by the fleetness of his horses.

The wounded old priest was carried to his bed. The ecclesiastics of the parish assembled,

ble, and in an address to their Curé, demand an immediate recourse to the archbishop, and at the same time a complaint of the sacrilegious crime. The Curé, having taken information of the criminals, and finding them to be such powerful persons, a long time refused performing his duty. The Countess de B——e, mother to the prince, is at length informed of the affair; she immediately silenced all parties, by an annuity to the priest, and before the police could take cognizance of this disgraceful behaviour. She desired that the prince should himself apologise for his conduct; but this was *refused*. This, for some time, afforded a topic of conversation to the Parisians. The populace murmured, and could only blame the dishonorable weakness of the Curé, who permitted a public transaction of so shameful a nature not to be expiated by a public punishment. The philosophers themselves were not silent; they not only felt a horror

at the barbarity of the action, but they exacted, though vainly, that a striking example of justice, should restrain the *Great* who were every day insulting the nation by their pride and wantonness remaining unchastised.

It was in vain that the nation murmured, and the philosophers declaimed; the prince de L——c was *grand Ecuyer de France*. For such an officer to overturn the host, and break an old man's limb, could not be a crime. Let us remember, that this prince, in the Thuilleries, on the 14th of July, 1789, had not then lost the same imperious inhumanity; with a stroke from his sabre he massacred an unfortunate decrepid old man.

Another glaring insolence of the nobility happened in 1783. M. de Choiseul-Meuse, driving a chaise, by his own unskilfulness, entangled his wheels with those of a hackney coach. He immediately revenged his own

ill driving on the miserable coachman; after having given him about twenty found canings, the poor fellow, smarting with pain and indignation, defended himself from the attacks of our fiery young lord; when, this gentleman immediately drew the sword from his cane, and repeatedly wounded the coachman, till he fell from the box. He was departing, when the populace assembled round him, and insisted on carrying the murderer to the commissary. This justice, instead of sending him to prison, was satisfied in fining him in a sum for the relief of the wounded coachman, and adding a polite reprimand.

The report of the coachman's death, a few days after, excited the indignation of Paris. The parliament were greatly incensed at the shameful violence of young Choiseul. Several recent events of this kind, determined them to restrain, by a public example, the cruel despotism of these arrogant lords. They prepared a forcible remonstrance to his majesty,

majesty, to commute the fine into a long imprisonment. But how did this terminate? The powerful Choiseuls alarmed at the ferment which existed in the parliament, exerted themselves in dispersing the pending storm. Their interest and a little money prevailed; the remonstrance was not made, Choiseul was not punished, and the hackney coachman remained unavenged.

THE pride of the court is, perhaps, strongly characterised by the following anecdote. The French nobility we know will not blame *Madame* for her resolution in this affair; but we address ourselves to the English nation.

Madame refuses a lady of honour for a genealogical deficiency.

There appeared in 1779, a disposition in the court to discountenance the nobility for marrying into families, that could not boast of as rich blood as themselves; whatever other merits they might eminently possess. In consequence of this, *Madame* refused to accept for her *Dame de Compagnie* (maid of

honour*) the Viscountess of Laval, because her maiden name was Boulogne, and her father, though a treasurer, had raised himself from a low origin. The Lavals, father and son, as the gentlemen of Monsieur, were piqued at this insult; they affirmed that the *name* of *Laval* had ennobled that of *Boulogne*, and had taken away the *blot* of a humble birth. This was not acknowledged, and they sent in their resignation. When Monsieur, with a cold contempt and unfeeling disposition (which I understand to be his character) said to him, in his farewell address, You do not follow the *best road*—No, sir, replied the duke, but it is that of *honour*.

* In France were *formerly* maids of honour, who attended the queen; but Louis XIV. having frequently chosen from among them several for his *mistresses*, besides the lords of the court, who formed intrigues which occasioned disagreeable occurrences; the *queens* became most interested, and were the first to demand, that their future establishments might consist of *married ladies*; which custom has been ever since wisely observed.

But

But it seems while Madame refused to have an amiable lady, because her father had not been a nobleman; a *Countess* of a different character was acceptable. It was the *nobility* of a person, and not his *virtues*, or his *talents* which rendered him acceptable at court. The countess of B—y, was discovered by her husband, sleeping with a courtier. In the moment of despair and rage, it is said he attempted to destroy his lady, a child of eighteen months, and the adulterer. To shun the future vengeance of her husband, she had him bled and physicked, and declared a lunatic. This cruel derision wounded his agitated spirits, and his extreme sensibility, preyed on his heart, till a settled melancholy took possession of his soul. He quitted his country, his connections, and his unfeeling consort; and resigned himself to a voluntary exile. He first wandered in a most deplorable state, and at last suddenly disappeared.

Yet this woman, the horror of all sensible minds, the execration of all virtuous, was admitted by Madame, to be her lady of honour, in preference to the amiable Dutcheſs of Laval. The remonſtrances made to the queen, by the family of the Noailles, that the preference of Madame on this occaſion was ſhamefully partial, and that it was indecent to ſubſtitute a woman of ſuch a character, occaſioned her majeſty to addreſs herſelf to Madame. Theſe two royal perſonages could never agree; and Madame only dully answered, that ſhe was alſo miſtreſs of having a *favourite*; a Madame Jules (De Polignac) as well as her majeſty. By this retort and confeſſion, it appears that a character, ſuch as this Counteſs is repreſented to be, was adapted to become the *favourite* of a *Princeſs*!

It is very neceſſary to add, that in the *Livre Rouge*, the following article appears. The reader is apprized, that the *articles* in the
Livre

Livre Rouge are all *authentic*; the observations as they are *called*, which accompany them, are merely the production of the person who was appointed to edit the work. These observations, it must be acknowledged, are ill written, and contain nothing but gross abuse. What we transcribe appeared in the original, and it will serve for an excellent commentary on this favourite of *Monsieur*. Felicite Countess of B—y, lady of honour to Madame, a pension of 100,000 livres!!!

The motives of this enormous pension are not given; though certainly at present well known. We are informed that this lady now accompanies the emigrant Princes; she was the arbitress of the little court at *Coblentz*, and is faithfully attached to the service of *Monsieur*.

AN acknowledged *favourite* of the minister or king of France, appears to have been

Singular devotions paid to a court favourite.

more adored than either. He received at every hour some ceremony of this political devotion; his altar was ever burning with incense, and his ear ever dwelt on the hymns chaunted by adulation. One of these demi-gods was M. de Vougny Maurepas.

This gentleman was a person of considerable fortune, and though he was occupied in no employment for himself, was by no means an idler, as he had the affairs of almost every one to pursue. The minister Maurepas and his lady had conceived the warmest affection for this amiable gentleman, and he was distinguished by their name, in consequence of his friendship with them. His greatest pleasure consisted in travelling as rapidly as possible, and almost every day he effected his twenty or thirty leagues. Hastening to the burial of a lady of quality, he found the hour late, and hurrying along fell into the grave; fainted, and broke his leg. When the company arrived at the grave,

grave, they found to their astonishment, the living and absent M. Vougny, occupying the place reserved for his departed friend.

Scarcely was this dreadful event known at Paris, but princes of the blood; the ministers, the courtiers, the actors, &c. &c. &c. hasten to send, and most came personally to enquire after the broken leg of the minister's favourite. Above four hundred persons, among which were ladies of all kinds, of whom he was the avowed protector, subscribed their names to his list; and its perusal greatly enchanted M. Vougny, and was a balm for the cure of his leg. This gentleman was by no means ready at bon mots; and though his situation was not a very happy one for a stroke of wit, he observed to the grave digger, when he came to assist him, that he gladly accepted his aid, for he did not desire to hinder any person from his place.

A court favourite breaks his leg, which occasions great confusion throughout Paris.

De Vougny was the subject of all the
polite

polite circles at Paris; and his list of four hundred, every hour increasing, he amused his confinement in reading the new *names*, and making his *commentaries* on them.

The Countess of Maurepas, was desirous in visiting him, to give a new mark of her esteem for De Vougny, and his broken leg. She obtained on this occasion a *Cross of St. Louis* for the *brother* of De Vougny! This brother had dissipated his fortune in the most extravagant debaucheries. But because M. De Vougny had a broken leg, and the Countess solicited the minister of war, the *reward* was immediately accorded! Such were the base adulation and the general frivolity of the courtiers of France!

The order of
Perseverance
was estab-
lished at
Court.

AMONG these polished idlers, and frivolous sentimentalist, (for sometimes among their refinements, they pretended to that of an excessive sensibility) it was proposed, to establish at *court*, a *new order*, under the name
of

of PERSEVERANCE. It was to consist of the ladies and gentlemen of the court. The occupations of this were simply to consist of amusement and gallantry. A brilliant temple was to be erected to this divinity, and three altars were to be raised to HONOUR, to FRIENDSHIP, and to HUMANITY. At the Palais Royal, this project was first brought forwards, and the queen was to be its patroness. Preparatory assemblies were held, at one of which, the celebrated Madame de Genlis, made an eloquent oration.

The day after, at a horse race, the Count d'Artois, lost considerably, according to his custom. My lord, said the Marquis of Coigny, they are much embarrassed to choose a grand master for the order of perseverance, you are worthy of that distinction.

BUT unhappy was the man who in the wantonness of his pen dared at this moment to write a dull epigram, or even a miserable
piece

piece of doggrel against a courtier. Even Louis XVI. could exert, in favour of a debauched courtier, an excessive severity. A poor quatrain appeared against the prince of Henin, captain of the guards of the count d'Artois. Under a coarse point, was concealed hard truths relative to the stupidity, libertinism, and nothingness of this lord, who, connected with all the impures of Paris, had exhausted his vigour and his fortune. Such as this poor epigram is, the reader must have it,

Depuis qu'auprès de ta Catin,
 Tu fais un rôle des plus Minces
 Tu n'es plus le prince d'Henin (des Nains)
 Mais seulement le Nain des Princes,

The prince was told that this poor quatrain was written by the marquis de Champcenets, governor of the Chateaux de Meudon. He complained of it to his master, the count d'Artois, and the marquis was condemned by
 the

the king to be *exiled* during *two years*, and six months *imprisonment*. It was well known afterwards that the marquis was not the author of these punning rhymes. But such was the terrible despotism of the court, at that moment, that Louis XVI. was made to act in this and a few other instances, with all the ferocity of a dey of Algiers.

A COURT adulator, when he found his credit on the decline, often displayed an inventive ingenuity to attract the variable dispositions of his idol. The comptroller general, in 1776, perceived that he was daily losing the good graces of the king; to reinstate himself in them, he employed a singular turn.

Singular stratagems of court adulators.

The comptroller, though lazy in the national labours of the closet, had dispositions for those of the hand; the king was also a lover of little manual operations. Our comptroller thought to regain his affections by rendering himself skilful in little pieces of mechanism,

mechanism, and particularly in the art of making locks and keys. For this purpose he sent for two German locksmiths, the most celebrated ones in Europe. Every morning our comptroller was a docile pupil under his two German locksmiths, and became so expert in the art of lock and key making, that he was capable of giving his majesty new lessons, and gaining the admiration of the court!—while he remained in office. It is not probable that the locks and keys of an *ex-minister* would have been at all attended to.

ANOTHER anecdote of a congenial cast, is the following. It is the most singular courtly and parasitical fervility which the basest detainer of a great man ever arrived at. The minister Machault had lost a little female grey-hound, which was a great favourite. Bouret, who possessed the spirit of intrigue in the supreme degree, and who had long sighed to

to be noticed by the minister, considered this as the most favourable opportunity, and with an ingenuity, as remarkable as the littleness of mind that could have invented it, put the following scheme in execution. He had every research possible made to find out a similar one; he finds one; takes it home; and dresses a puppet with a black robe, like that which the comptroller general, as keeper of the seals always wore. He trains up the little grey-hound to caress this wooden comptroller, and never to eat till it had first paid a mark of obedience to it. When he thought it was sufficiently used to flatter the representative of the minister, he leads it to M. de Machault's house, and as the grey-hound saw the comptroller, he ran to him, leaped on his neck, and licked his face, so that the minister believed it was the favourite little creature he had lost. It is very unnecessary to add, that a man capable of paying such an unremitting attention

to a *dog*, was well adapted to ingratiate himself by every species of base servility, in the good graces of a *minister*. This gentleman did something familiar, though not so wise, several years afterwards. It would be tedious to enter into a detail of his manoeuvres to captivate the kindness of the marchioness of Pompadour and the monarch. This real courtier gained and spent millions. The king having found a spot in the wood of Sennar, adapted for a hunting rendezvous, the artful courtier bought the land, erected an admirable lodge, known long after under the name of the king's lodge, and sacrificed, it is said, his fortune for the honour of receiving his majesty, and to see him eat a peach. What is still more curious, at the very moment he was enjoying the honour of the king's presence, his creditors were seizing on his furniture at Paris. This lodge by its magnificence and taste, cost a million of livres. When the king first saw it, with
a pleasing

a pleasing astonishment, a courtier observed, that his majesty should have a similar one. I am not rich enough, was the royal answer.

AMONG the many serious contests which have arisen between the courtiers, for the most frivolous etiquettes, the following one is remarkable.

A singular disturbance at court occasioned by a minuet.

At the marriage of the late queen of France with Louis XVI. then dauphin, a dispute which put all the court in a flame, took place in consequence of a *minuet*. The king, partial to the house of Lorraine, decided that a lady of that family should dance immediately after the princesses of the blood. This decision *alarmed the dukes*. They directly held a *consultation* at M. de Broglio's, count and bishop, as one of the most ancient peers then at Paris. In spite of the horror which the church must feel on the subject of *dancing*, they discussed, digested, and composed

posed a memoir, which the prelate was to present to his majesty, with the greatest solemnity. Most of the nobility had also signed this curious *remonstrance* on the subject of a *minuet*, to give it the more authority.

The house of Lorraine, on their side, pretended to a right to this prerogative, in consequence of others it had enjoyed from time immemorial.

The king replied to the remonstrance of the dukes, by a letter remarkable for its barbarous French, humiliating apologies, and unkingly diction.

A singular
frivolous and
ill written
Letter of
Louis XV.

The letter is given as a curious specimen of bad composition, and singular frivolity in the letter of a monarch.

“ The ambassador of the emperor and empress queen, in an audience which he had of me, has asked me from his master (and I am obliged to give credit to what he says) that I would be pleased to give some mark of distinction to Madame de Lorraine, at the present

present marriage of my grandson with the arch-dutcheſs Antoinette. The dance at the ball being the only thing which is of no material conſequence, ſince the choice of the dancers, both men and women, only depends on my will, without any diſtinction of places, ranks, or dignities, except the princes and princeſſes of my blood, who cannot be compared or placed in the rank with any other Frenchman, and not chuſing beſides to innovate in any thing uſual at my court, I believe that the great (*les grands*) and the nobility of my kingdom, in virtue of ſubmiſſion, attachment, and even friendſhip which they have ever ſhewn to me and my predeceſſors will never do any thing which can diſpleaſe me, and above all in this preſent circumſtance, where I deſire to ſhew to the empreſs my gratitude of the preſent ſhe has made, which I hope, as well as you, will make the happineſs of the reſt of my days."

M 2

This

This embarrassed letter, it is curious to observe, consists nearly of a *single period*! It is probably his majesty was its author; he has no claims to the honour of being a fine writer, nor a friend to an asthmatic reader.

The matter did not here terminate. A great number of ladies invited on the occasion were absent from the ceremony. The dukes held assemblies on this fatal *minuet*. It was under their patronage that a work which displays uncommon erudition and taste was published. It is entitled, "An Essay on the Rank and Honours of the Court." This was answered by the Abbé Georget, in a voluminous work, which displayed still more erudition than the former.

* Reflections
on a court
minuet.

What a concatenation of frivolity does all this exhibit! The king suffers a pretty girl to dance a minuet, and behold the nobility of France are assembled, draw up remonstrances, and their ladies banish themselves from court. The king writes a miserable letter,

letter, and two learned scholars produce two curious works---and all this for a *minuet*!

VOLTAIRE has perfectly characterised these courtiers by two admirable verses, who

Voltaire's
character of
the courtiers

Vont en poste à Versailles effuyer des mepris,
Qu'ils reviennent soudain rendre en poste à Paris.

Such were the timid, vile, and servile courtiers. Disgusted and contemned at the court, they crawled in all the dirty and corrupt paths of intrigue; but haughty, vain, and insolent at Paris, they insulted the nation by an ostentatious magnificence, and a continued usurpation of the just rights of their fellow citizens.

Latterly when their poverty was greater than their pride, they condescended to intermarry with families who, without having to boast of the honours of nobility, had acquired the immense fortunes of commercial

The courtiers marry into ignoble and rich families.

speculation. The nobles wanted the money which the financiers had accumulated, and the financiers wanted the honours of the nobles. The financier can only be regarded as a robber of magnitude, and the noble was the receiver of the stolen goods. When these lords married into obscure but rich families, they used to call this act, *taking dung to fatten their estates*. They too often latterly *really* dishonoured themselves by shameful *marriages*. Many of the nobility were united to *prostitutes*, and *opera dancers*. It is very probable that this became a fashion in consequence of the example of Louis XV. who placed almost on his throne, a woman, who had been, at an early age, prostituted to the embraces of the lowest classes; but selected by the debauched taste of this monarch, he exhibited himself and her as a spectacle to all Europe; and paved the way to that execration which every honest man feels, at the view of a dissolute, enervated,

vated, and despotic prince. But the sunshine in which this herd of splendid slaves basked and wantoned, has past—They lived,

Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

GRAY.

THE following anecdote will amuse the poetical reader, and convince him of what, perhaps he is ready to acknowledge, that a vile flatterer at court is an unfair critic of those verses which are not adapted to give pleasure to his patron or patroness.

A court adulator is an unfair critic of verses written against his patron.

The Duchess of Polignac, being pregnant, to be nearer the queen, in order to pay her utmost attention to her royal friend, in the summer of 1781, had begged of Madame de Boufflers, to permit her to rent her house, at Auteil, celebrated for its gardens laid out in the English taste. This lady extremely attached to this little place, which had long

M 4

formed

formed her favourite employment, and not being desirous, however, of disobliging the powerful Dutcheſs, answered her demand, by the following verſes.

Tout ce que vous voyez, conſpire à vos deſirs,
 Vos jours toujours ſereins coulent dans les plaiſirs,
 L'empire en eſt pour vous l'inepuisable ſource ;
 Ou ſi quelque chagrin en interrompt la courſe,
 Le courtiſan, ſoigneux à les entretenir,
 S'empreſſe à l'effacer de votre ſouvenir.
 Moi je ſuis ſeule ici, quelque' ennui qui me preſſe,
 Je n'en vois dans mon fort aucun qui s'intereſſe ;
 Et n'ai pour tout plaiſir, Madame, que ces fleurs,
 Dont le parfum exquis vient charmer mes douleurs.

All that you ſee conſpire to your deſires,
 Your life ſerenely flows amid the pleaſures,
 The empire is to you th' eternal ſource ;
 Or if ſome little care arreſts its courſe
 The courtier, watchful ſtill to guard it fair,
 Haſtens to blot it from your memory.
 Here I alone, though many a care perplex,
 See none who feel an intereſt for me,
 And find no other pleaſure than theſe flowers,
 Whoſe exquisite perfume can charm my grief.

The Dutcheſs of Polignac having ſhewn
 theſe verſes as an obliging turn Madame
 de Boufflers

de Boufflers had taken to refuse her; the adulators of this royal favourite, found them extremely bad, and imagined that in this manner they might gratify their patroness. The criticisms of these satellites of this court planet, were conveyed to Madame Boufflers—I am sorry, replied the ingenious lady, for poor *Racine*; for they are *his*. And in fact these beautiful verses are to be found in the *Britannicus*, Act II, Scene 3.

IN 1782, the most interesting object which presents itself, is the bankruptcy of the Prince de Guemenée, the great Chamberlain of France, and the Princess, the Governante of the royal family, Enormous bankruptcy of a French prince. Often talked of, it found no believers, till the magnificent ruin appeared. They were continually making new loans, and as the confidence of the lenders did not fail, they were enabled, for a considerable time, to pay their arrears, but at the same time, enormously swelled the
 2 mass

mass of their debts. The public awakened from its delusion, no more lenders appeared; and a bankruptcy was announced, amounting to the amazing sum of twenty-five to *thirty millions!* This magnificent lord suddenly disappeared, and a general desolation took place at Paris; such was the number of his creditors, and such the excess of the failure.

The house of the Rohans, of whom the Prince was the head, were distracted, and the Prince of Soubise, since the fatal announce, neither eat nor slept. The steward of the prince was arrested, with several other officers and brokers employed by him. A decree of the king's council was passed, to seize every thing belonging to the estate. The life annuities which the bankrupt Prince had granted, amounted to above two millions of livres. In this sum are included a considerable number of pensions made to musicians, singers, opera dancers; for this magnificent lord had a concert, a theatre, and
every

every other appendage of extravagant caprice, which might hasten his ruin.

On examination, his lady the princess was found to have equally participated in the bankruptcy of her husband, and had at least equalled him in every species of luxurious expence. She indeed, not only received the wages for her attendants and equipages, but she expended them on her own private pleasures, and granted them life annuities in their place. She now received her dismissal from court, and the prince retired to Navarre, was there retained by the order of his majesty.

If the house of Rohan felt through all its branches, dishonour and distraction, on this fatal occasion, there was one at least who appeared to *glory* in it. The great almoner, brother to the Prince de Guemené, considered this extraordinary bankruptcy as an honourable distinction for his house. He said, *that there was only one king or one Rohan who could*

A nobleman exults in the enormity of his bankruptcy.

could make an equal bankruptcy. And indeed it was observed at the time, that the kings of Sardinia, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, and Naples, could not possibly imitate the Prince de Guemené,

The infamous consolation of the great almoner was properly answered by the Marchale de Luxembourg. When she was told by a courtier that the failure of the Prince de Guemené, was the *bankruptcy of a sovereign*; she answered; yes, but it is to be hoped it will be the last act of *sovereignty* made by the house of Rohan. All the higher nobility indeed were not displeased at this event, so humiliating to the Rohans, whose pretensions and powers had long been the object of court hatred and envy.

Several of this illustrious family, attempted to save the dishonour of their family, by retirement. The Princess of Marfan, it was said in the height of court favour, withdrew into the irksome solitude of a convent, and gave up
her

her revenues to maintain the honour of her house, if it were possible. But every day exposed some new infamy of the Prince. Since the war he had employed agents at Brest, and in almost all the ports, to seduce the poor sailors, and other sea-faring persons, who returning home either with prizes, or other profits, were deceived by an appearance of placing their little fortune to singular advantage. It was thus he seized on an immense property, to serve him to pay his pensions to opera dancers. Such, however, was the violent clamour among this honest and rough class, that the king thought proper to appease them, by an immediate distribution of money.

On this occasion Mademoiselle Guimard, Curious letter of Mademoiselle Guimard, to the Prince de Guemeneé on his bankruptcy. that refined courtesan, alike capable of every extravagance of debauchery, and grandeur of soul, as the anecdotes relative to her sufficiently prove, wrote the following letter, which throws over the voluptuousness of a prodigal

prodigal, a veil of a delicate texture. It renders engaging what should excite our abhorrence, and softens vice of half its repulsion, by taking away all its grossness. It is written with art and elegance.

Letter from Mademoiselle Guimard, and other dancers of the opera to the prince of Soubise.

MY LORD,

Accustomed, I and my companions, to possess you amidst us, every evening in the Lyrical Theatre, we have observed with regret of the bitterest nature, that you have severed yourself not only from the pleasure of the representation, but that not one of us, had been summoned to those delicious *petit-soupers*, where frequently we have alternately had the happiness of pleasing and amusing you. Fame has too well informed us of the cause of your solitude. Hitherto we have been fearful to trouble you; compelling our sensibility to yield to our respect, we had not

yet dared to break the silence, without the pressing motive to which our delicacy can no longer resist.

We had always flattered ourselves, my Lord, that the bankruptcy (for we must employ this term with which all the polite circles, gazettes, France and all Europe resound) that the bankruptcy of the prince de Guemené would not be so enormous as it was first declared; that the wise precautions taken by the king to insure to the claimants their just proportions; to shun the charges and depredations more dreadful than the failure itself, would not frustrate the general expectation: but the disorder has no doubt risen to so excessive an height, that no hope remains. We judge of this, by the generous *sacrifices* to which *imitating your example*, the principal heads of your illustrious house resign themselves.

We should consider ourselves as guilty of atrocious ingratitude, my lord, if we did not
also,

also, imitating you in assisting your *humanity*, if we did not bring to you the pensions which your munificence lavished on us.

Apply these revenues, my lord, to the relief of so many suffering officers, of so many poor men of letters, of so many unfortunate domestics, whom the prince de Guemené, drags into the abyss with himself. For us, we have other resources; we shall have lost nothing, my lord, if you will preserve for us your esteem; we shall even be gainers, if in refusing at present your favours, we shall compel our detractors to agree, that we were not entirely unworthy of them.

We are with the most profound respect,
&c.

From the *box* of Mademoiselle Guimard,
Friday, 6 December, 1782.

The accounts of the prince stood thus.
There were to pay

1,800,000 livres in life annuities,

4,000,000 in perpetual annuities.

There

There were only 500,000 livres of real income! Madame de Marfan, and the Cardinal de Rohan took on themselves to pay the *small debts*, which otherwise would have ruined about one thousand five hundred families!

On this occasion Louis XVI. behaved with great firmness. After several unsuccessful applications, the prince de Soubise was the bearer of a letter from his relation the prince de Guemené to the king, but his majesty threw it unopened into the fire, in adding, I will hear no more; tell him that he must not flatter himself ever to appear before me till his debts are paid.

THE late Manuel in his History of the Police of Paris, has given an anecdote respecting the duke of Chartres (Egalité) that is by no means improbable. He notices a class of women who in the public places of amusement, take pleasure in pointing at the *widows*

Anecdote of
Widows
whose husbands were
alive.

N

whose

whose *husbands* are yet *alive*, and claim precedence of those Penelopes——Who is she in the next box at the playhouse, whose diamonds are so brilliant and so thickset? cries the virtuous daughter of Penthievre.—Don't you know her, answers the lady she spoke to——*She is your husband's kept mistress!* He tells us also that the late prince de Conti, who, like so many other courtiers, fell a martyr to debauchery, gave to an opera girl one day a coach and three hundred louis, which she immediately spent with one of his own musicians. Of another this prince said, “I have taken her, I cannot tell why; I keep her, I cannot tell wherefore, and she has already cost me above one thousand louis, for which I can give no reason.” And yet, compared with some of his companions, the prince does not appear by any means extravagant.

THE military cross of the corps of Saint Louis had been instituted by Louis XIV. as
an

an honourable recompence for those who had distinguished themselves in war, and had afterwards degenerated into a mark of honour for every officer who had served for the space of twenty years. In thus multiplying the bearers of this cross, it's value became every day less and less, at length the court degraded it till it became contemptible. It was now the badge of infamy, the spurious honour of a Parasite, a Pandar, or any other vermin of the court. It was often obtained by persons who long confined for their ill conduct in prison, thought proper to get themselves decorated by this military mark of honour. M. de Sauvigny, because he wrote an indifferent poem for the count d'Artois, received this cross; and as he was known not to be the bravest man in the world, it afforded some entertainment, to see him wear this ornament, which bears for its motto,

Virtutis bellicæ præmium.

The prize of military virtue.

The military Cross of Saint Louis disgraced by the Chevaliers.

The French
under the
government
of Women.

It was the boast of the French nation, that by the virtue of their Salic law, they were not governed by a *woman*. It is certain however, that nothing is less true; for it was ever a mistress of the king, or the minister, (though lately a queen,) who directed the affairs of government. Neither of the three last monarchs of France, were absolute at home. The *women* influenced every department of government. They appointed ministers, generals, bishops, &c. Mademoiselle Arnoulx, connected with the Bishop of Orleans, had under her directions the *feuille des benefices*; and not only appointed her creatures to, or sold the vacant benefices, but more than once directed her presentations by a whim. It was thus, that she gave the bishopric of *Grasse* to an abbé, because he was remarkable for a meagre and lank countenance. Kerfaint, lately guillotined, was appointed to the command of the *Iphigenia*, a frigate, because he was a great admirer

Singular
anecdote of
the capri-
cious mode
of creating
Bishops and
Officers.

admirer of the *opera* of that name, in which she performed the principal character!

The *women* indeed greatly contributed to propagate the dogmas of the revolution. The female sex greatly contribute to the Revolution. It has been observed, that the christian religion was in its infant state, cherished and protected by the female sex. Whatever is addressed to the imagination by an ideal perfection, and engages by its novelty, is congenial to the lively sensibility of the feminine mind. The beautiful prospects opened by the modern philosophers, enchanted their imagination. But another cause occurred which made the *female* part of the nation, the votarists of the philosophers. All the women, of the second order, and the wealthy *Bourgeoises*, could not patiently suffer that immense distance which the ladies of rank, and the whole nobility, had formed between them. They delighted in a *Revolution* which should place them on a level with these higher orders; and they have co-operated as

much as they could, with the democratic part of the nation. A French writer in 1782, says, "You cannot think with what an energy the fair sex act, and what an ascendancy they have on the other, in this country. I am of opinion, that the *nobility* take too much advantage over them, and they treat with too much contempt the Plebeians. The laws are only made strict against these latter; whoever is a lord, or protected by a lord, openly dares to brave them."

Louis XVI. despotic as was the monarchy of France, could not have dared to punish a minister; this required a firmness and an intrepidity which he never possessed. The numerous colleagues of the minister, would have cried out sacrilege. No man was ever so black at the court of France, but means were ready to render him as white as snow. But were there spots of so dark a nature, that no art could efface them, a ducal cloak covered all; and the condign punishment of
the

the most infamous, was an order to retire to his magnificent villa ! There was an invincible chain running through all the branches of the administration ; a link could not be broken without the most imminent peril. Often must the honest heart of Louis XVI. have groaned, at seeing his integrity baffled ; and often must he have been sensible, that to break this chain of corruption, required a power more than human, nothing less than a supernatural influence. But this will be the subject of our next article.

OF
MINISTERS
 AND THEIR
SUBALTERNS.

Louis XVI.
 described on
 his accession
 to the throne

WE shall attempt to describe the situation of Louis XVI. at the moment the youthful monarch ascended the throne. Louis XV. dies, a prince of only twenty years succeeds. At first he had no other council, than the advice which the late dauphin, his father, had left him in his own hand writing. This precious gift was not to be opened till the son

was

was seated on the throne. Louis XVI. with all imaginable ardour hastened to open the manuscript, that he might with a religious veneration, perform its contents. He observes, that his father advises him to invite to court, for his Mentor, M. de Machault, as the most able person to direct his steps, when the weight of royalty should fall on him, at a period, when the only means to support it could yet be a rectitude of intention, and a desire of benevolence. Faithful to the wishes of his father the youthful Louis, immediately takes a pen, and writes the following letter to M. de Machault.

Singular anecdote of Louis XVI. Letter to his first minister

Choisy, 11th May, 1774.

“ IN the just grief which overwhelms me, and which I participate with all the kingdom, I have great duties to fulfil; I am king, and this name includes all my obligations. But I have only twenty years, and I have not acquired all the knowledge necessary for my
 1 situation,

situation, and also I must not see any of the ministers, since they have all been with the king during his contagious distemper. The confidence which I repose in your probity, and your profound knowledge in affairs, induces me to desire you would assist me with your advice. Come as soon as you can possibly, and you will do me a great pleasure.

LOUIS."

M. de Machault merited in every respect the confidence of the young monarch. He had long been the minister of finances and of law under Louis XV. It appears that he had been dismissed from his employments in the reign of the preceding monarch, because he was desirous of obliging the clergy, (that numerous and untaxed body in the state) to pay the taxes like other citizens. Louis XV. had supported him for some time against his enemies, but the ecclesiastical cabal repeated
their

their efforts, and Louis XV. yielded*. Since his dismissal M. de Machault lived on his estate in the deepest retirement, esteemed by every honest man, and hated by the clergy.

There now remained nothing wanting but the direction of the letter, to send it to M. Machault; but whether it was a natural timidity, or a desire of confirming the goodness of his choice, Louis XVI. went to his aunt Mademoiselle Adelaide; communicates to her the intentions of his father, and shews the letter he had in consequence written, but not addressed. The princess approves his conduct, and even desires her nephew to

* This appears by an extract from a letter, written by Louis XV. to his favourite daughter the dutchess of Parma. It is preserved by the author of the private Life of Louis XV. The king wrote, "They have done so much that they have forced me to dismiss Machault, the man of my heart; I shall never forgive myself"—This trait admirably depicts the character of Louis XV. It shews his dishonourable love of ease; a desire of acting rightly; a discernment to perceive what was right, and a feebleness which rendered all his desires abortive.

send off a courier immediately with the letter. The king unfortunately keeps it back several hours. Mademoiselle Adelaide, as most ladies would naturally do, informs her female suite of the choice of the prime minister. The news darts like lightning, and the alarm is spread among the courtiers. Every one among this sycophantic swarm, dreaded the integrity, and the austere virtues of the minister now to be called as the pilot of the realm. Soon intrigue is put in motion, and corruption follows; one hundred thousand crowns are offered to a lady (who was well known to have a great influence over the mind of the princess,) if she was to be successful in changing the choice in favour of M. Maurepas. - This gentleman had been minister at the juvenile age of fifteen, and had been dismissed at thirty. He possessed a fund of intrigue and good nature although now advanced in life, he was known for having lived a life of dissipation, and to be of
a temper

a temper pliant to all, while he remained in office. M. de Maurepas, in a word, was the person adapted to the views of these courtiers, desirous of prolonging the abuses of the late reign. The hundred thousand crowns tempted the lady of honour, and she adroitly insinuated to the princess, that the choice of M. de Machault would not fail of offending the clergy, that in consequence the commencement of the new reign would be stormy; in short, she contrived to alarm Mademoiselle Adelaide; this princess hastens to disclose her anxiety to the king, and the unfortunate Louis XVI. naturally timid, and now dreading the consequences of this his first act of royalty, he finished by directing the same letter to the count de Maurepas!

It was thus, that in his first step towards the throne, he fell into a net; and this first error was the fertile source of a thousand others. The old Maurepas, on the brink of his tomb, immediately thought it necessary

to

to secure friends, who, in extolling him every where, concurred in maintaining him in the place of great visier. To augment their number, he bought them in all modes. To some he gave pensions; for others, he made new offices; and by these means hastened the ruin and deficit of the finances. What, indeed, had this nobleman done to be raised to the important post of prime minister? He possessed great gaiety; wrote epigrams; was a lover of every kind of frivolity and dissipation; and no man lost by being his friend. He was an accomplished gentleman, but an unskilful minister. Such a premier, therefore, could not but be grateful to the dissolute courtiers of Versailles. Such fatal consequences never arose from changing the address of a letter.

Anecdotes of
Turgot.

Maurepas, soon called to his aid M. Turgot, as minister of finances. This latter, some say, brought with him narrow views and miserable reforms, but his probity is acknowledged by
all

all parties. Turgot was, as we have mentioned, of the sect of the Economists. The following anecdote concerning his elevation is extremely curious. When he was elected into office, the choice was by no means agreeable to those Economists themselves, who were admitted into the eleusynian mysteries of the society. This naturally excited great surprise. When they were asked, how it happened that they were not charmed with the promotion of one of their members to the place of comptroller general? Because, they replied, Turgot is an honest man; he will yet maintain the edifice, for some time, by continued little props; and such a man we do not want—Who would you have in his place? was asked. *Calonne* they answered—*Calonne!* what *Calonne*, the greatest of dissipators?—Yes, *Calonne* (the Economists always answered) he will finish to dissipate all the finances; he in a short time will

Curious
anecdote of
the Econo-
mists.

will hasten the fall of the edifice, *and we then shall form a new one!*

At first the election of Turgot excited a national enthusiasm. It appeared as if the Saturnian age was returning. Yet under this philosopher the nation was not so happy as was expected. The government corrected many of the proprieties (all exclusive rights) and one part of the nation was crushed to relieve the other. Liberty was the word of the Economists, at the same moment, (said some,) that the most arbitrary power was exerted against the prescribed part. This conduct was glaringly contradictory. Turgot answered one, who made this observation—
“The right of contradicting me, is part of that liberty which I would establish.”

Among the reforms, or rather the liberty which Turgot was desirous of instituting, a pleasant circumstance took place in consequence of the edict which suppressed all corporations, and allowed every man to take up
what

what profession he chose. A person who had no profession at all, and was in great want of one, invented a new mode of livelihood, by *saying masses*. He used to enter several churches every day, and get his half-crown. He was at length discovered, and taken up. Interrogated on the reason of his sacrilegious occupation, he drew out of his pocket, his majesty's edict, which suppressed all *corporations*, and said, "It is in virtue of this liberty granted to every one, to take up what trade he chuses, that I have made myself a priest. I know no profession; I must live, and I find I can do the duty of the mass extremely well. You may ask those who have been present at hundreds of mine."

Anecdote of
one who
takes up the
trade of a
Priest.

The parliament of Paris opposed with their remonstrances the innovations of Turgot. The court confessed that they had been mistaken, the enlightened Turgot was dismissed, and things were reinstated on their old footing. It must be acknowledged,

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that

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that such a diversity of systems rapidly following each other, could not but justly irritate the nation; whom, like an unhappy convict, every quack was allowed to try his experiments on.

Of the Minister Necker.

The next state quack was Necker, who was likewise introduced by Maurepas.—Necker had originally been a banker, and had enriched himself, by the usual means of speculation, and intrigue, and it is said, that his connexion with the infamous abbé Terrai (who considered the people as so many beasts of burthen) did more credit to his political views, than to that affectation of public good which he afterwards professed. We shall not decide on his character. He certainly promised miracles; but it is now a late age to perform them. He also amused the nation with several publications. Voltaire did not think highly of the books of our financier, as appears by the following anecdote. When a work of Necker's was sent to

to this wit for his opinion, he wrote for answer, "I do not know of any writings of M. Necker which are better than his bills of exchange." Necker at length became comptroller general, and, it is said, that when he was once firmly fixed in this place, his views were by no means consonant with those of his patron Maurepas, and his majesty. He enjoyed, however, the confidence of the nation; the bankers and the protestants were particularly devoted to him; for he was a banker and a protestant. The protestant expected to receive under his administration, the rights of a citizen, and the banker to participate in some profitable loan.

The great work published in his name (for d'Alembert and others it is believed, assisted him) was the *Compte rendu*, or the balance of France. It had hardly been published a few hours when twelve thousand copies were sold. The Royale and most other printing offices,

could not satisfy the eager demands of the public. It was an extraordinary novelty for the French nation, who had not been accustomed to see their ministers of finance condescend to offer them a state of it's situation, and place under their own eyes their present and passed accounts. It was a dangerous experiment. The enthusiasm spread through all classes, and every Frenchman marvelled and exulted.

It was too capital a production to escape critical sarcasm. The count de Lauragais, famous for his bon mots, made the following pun; he said it was not *un Compte rendu*, but *un Conte bleu*. It happened to be sewed unluckily in blue covers. The following humorous advertisement describes it not amiss. It is proper to observe, that the authors are said to have been d'Alembert, de la Harpe, two Abbés, a Clerk, and M. Necker. "The Balance of France, a Romance, in quarto, imitated from the Irish account by Law.

Translated

Translated by a society of men of letters, and preceded by an epistle, dedicated to the king, by M. Necker; with the approbation of the anti-turgotists; anti-economists; exchange speculators of France and Europe, as well as of all stock-jobbers."

We do not pretend from ourselves to decide on the character and views of Necker. By what can be gathered from various quarters, it would appear, that he had an insatiable ambition; and as was said at the time of his recall, that he seemed to aspire to the throne itself, and become Necker I. It would also appear that the evils of France are to be attributed to him. He attempted to regenerate (says the author of the *Lettres Historiques*) a great nation; he has bewildered it, he has lost it, and he at length finishes by losing himself. He may, therefore, be compared to that madman Erostratus, who burnt the Ephesian temple, that his name might be preserved.

*What
misery!*

It is well known that Mrs. Necker was the secret spring of her husband's actions.

Louis XVI.
observations
on Necker.

Louis XVI. appears to have seized his character with just discrimination. The following anecdote is given on good authority. After his majesty had a long conference with Necker, he told Maurepas.—“ I have seen your friend, we must employ him for the maintenance of credit, but we must bind his hands in other respects. He is an ambitious, adventurous and daring man. It seems after what he has insinuated to me, that he considers himself capable of being prime minister.” Maurepas promised to keep him merely as director of the finances. “ You will see,” continued the king, “ that he won't rest there.”

Calonne
minister.

After the first dismissal of Necker, succeeded Calonne, a man not less ambitious, nor less dangerous; but different in this, that he was a polished and abject courtier. It will be sufficient to observe, that he was a favourite with

with the queen; and that he would refuse no prodigality whenever it furthered his views. A proper minister for the exhausted treasury of a ruined nation!

His character is forcibly depicted by an anecdote in our article of *THE QUEEN*.

It is supposed, that by an article in the treaty of peace, made with France in 1761, by England, the court of France was restrained from increasing its navy by *building* new men of war. In consequence of this supposition, most of the French provinces made a spontaneous gift to his majesty of a man of war. Thus many of the French ships bear provincial names; such are the Languedoc; the Bourgoigne; the Bretagne, &c. These presents were gratefully received by that illustrious beggar, the monarch of France; who though he might have agreed to obtain peace on the humiliating terms of *not building* men of war, had not consented

Curious anecdote of the minute prudence of ministers in poems and sweet-meats.

to refuse those which might be *given* to him. But it was not the interest of the court, that these patriotic gifts should be too much noticed by the nation, nor England. In January 1762, M. Colardeau, had celebrated in a poem, entitled "Patriotism," the various and honourable gifts, which the different bodies of the kingdom had voluntarily hastened to offer to his majesty. This poem was not allowed, when first written, to be printed. Such indeed was the rigour of the Police on this head, that the *confectioners*, having formed in their sweetmeats, and other sugared allegories, several ingenious monuments to mark the patriotic fervour, the officers visited the *shops*, and pulverised these sweet and political morsels. At length the enthusiasm of the nation was permitted to take its range, and a short time afterwards the poem of Colardeau was approved by the court; and a considerable number of patriotic poems, and sweetmeats appeared

appeared at the same time. Such was the wavering irresolution, and the minute prudence of the court, and the Police! Such the patriotism and frivolity of the French!

ALL these poems were not so excellent as the sweetmeats. The artists in sugar succeeded much better than those in verse. Among the little pieces which inundated Paris, on this occasion, the following humorous one by Voltaire, to excite the same passion in, or to ridicule the non-patriotism of the Clergy has too much merit to be passed over in silence. It is a pleasant satire on the ecclesiastics.

A humorous
political
Squib by
Voltaire.

*Extract from the Gazette of London, 20th
February, 1762.*

“ We learn that our neighbours the French are animated as much as ourselves, by the spirit of patriotism. Several bodies of that kingdom, have signalized their zeal
for

for their king and country. They yield even the necessaries of life to furnish ships, and we are given to understand that the *Monks*, who also should love the king, will, no doubt, bestow their rich superfluities."

"We are informed that the *Benedictines*, who possess about *nine millions* of livres of revenue in the kingdom of France, will furnish, at least, nine ships of the first rate. That the Abbot of Citeaux, a very important personage in the state, since he possesses without contradiction, the finest vineyards of Burgundy, and the amplest tuns, will augment the marine with some of his casks. At present he is building a *palace*, which will cost him a *million and seven hundred thousand livres*, and he has already spent *four hundred thousand livres*, in building a chapel to the glory of God; he is now preparing to build ships for the glory of the king."

"This edifying example, we are also informed, will be followed by Clairvaux.

Though

Though the vineyards of Clairvaux are not so considerable as those of Citeaux, but as it possesses *forty thousand acres* of forest, and other wood lands, it certainly is very capable of building several good ships."

" This will be followed by the Chartreux, who, indeed, were the first to enter into the project, because they are very nice in providing their tables with the best fish, and it is therefore, their interest to have an open sea. They enjoy *three millions* of revenue in France, all which is spent in procuring the finest turbots and soals. It is said that they will give out of their three millions, three fine ships of the line.

" The *Premontres*, and the *Carmes*, are as necessary in a state, as the Chartreux, and as they are equally rich, they will give the same quota. The other Monks will bear their proportionable shares. The French are so certain of this voluntary oblation from all the Monks, that it is evident, they must be regarded

regarded as the enemies of their country, if they should still continue to riot in their usual luxuries, unmindful of the urgent necessities of the nation."

" The Jews of Bourdeaux have all joined their subscriptions; the Monks, who are certainly as good as the Jews, will be jealous, no doubt, to maintain the superiority of the new law over the ancient.

" P. S. As France is in great want of *sailors*, the prior of the *Celestins*, has proposed to all regular abbés, Priors, *sub-priors*, *rectors*, *superiors*, who will furnish these ships, to send a vast multitude of brave novices to serve as midshipmen, and athletic professed monks, to serve as sailors. As these sturdy religionists do nothing but live well, walk about the streets, and pray, the said prior has, in an admirable oration, shewn that it is acting against the spirit of charity, to pass their time in such occupations, while the safety of the kingdom claims
the

the assistance of their vigorous arms; and he has also declared, that the saving of a kingdom is as good as the saving of souls."

IN September 1763, Bachaumont has the following article. It has long been the prevailing mode in literature to turn its enquiries to subjects of finance and politics. The calamities of the state have given birth to vigorous productions, worthy of the fairest days of Athens and of Rome. We see liberty, with a palpitating heart, render up its last sighs with the greatest energy. Every day produces powerful remonstrances, which the various parliaments do not cease to make in this stormy period. The late ones of Bourdeaux are not inferior to those of Paris and of Rouen; they become still bolder; and one at present from Grenoble is yet more energetic and astonishing.

The Parliament very turbulent in their Remonstrances

We are shortly afterwards informed, that several decrees of the king's council excited a
general

Remon-
frances of
the Parlia-
ments for-
bidden to be
printed.

general indignation by *suppressing* these admirable compositions that glow with all the fire of eloquence and freedom. It appears that the ministers, resolved, for their last resource, to interdict the parliaments from publishing these beautiful and powerful compositions; proper to transmit into the hands of individuals the strong and generous sentiments of true patriots. The plea urged against that of Bourdeaux, was adroitly turned on the objection that these writings only tended to *discourage the people*. This is the only motive alledged for the general prohibition that was made to all the printers in France, in this manner to *unveil the secrets* of the *court and parliaments*, without the *approbation of his majesty*.

An editor
imprisoned
for noticing
slightly the
inattention
of a minister

WHEN, about the year 1763, the French government resolved to people Cayenne, a new establishment in South America, they collected for this purpose the worst class of

the populace at Paris, consisting of the vagabonds of both sexes, they shipped them off for this place, where far the greater part perished with disease and poverty, and chiefly by the unwholesome food that the penury of government gave to them. Many respectable families greatly reduced in their circumstances, agreed to emigrate to this country. It was the duty, and, indeed, it had been declared to the public, that the government was to provide for them till they reached this settlement. The following anecdote proves not only that the minister did not perform his duty, but that he exercised the most dreadful despotism on the occasion.

Freron, the celebrated author of *L'Année Littéraire*, inserted in his journal, a letter addressed to the minister on the subject of a family of Alsace, who, in their road to Rochefort to reach the ships for Cayenne, although under the protection of the minister
appointed

appointed to supply their wants, were stopt by the extremest misery; the venerable father died, and the rest of the family owed their existence to the generous aid of an honest farmer. This act of humanity rendered public by the means of our journalist, was not at all relished at court, where it was considered as reflecting dishonourably on the shameful negligence of the minister.

A political crime was in consequence laid to the charge of Freron, only for having *inserted* the letter in his journal. The duke of Choiseul, at dinner heard this number mentioned. "Does that rascal," he cries, "dare to write any thing about Cayenne; bring me No. 34." The paper was handed to the minister, who after having read it, cried out, "He shall sleep to night at Fort L' Eveque."—And an Officer immediately was sent to Freron, to conduct him to this prison! Such was the iniquity of Ministers, and such their dreadful abuse of power!

THE government, indeed, appear to have exerted an unwearied vigilance, on the various publications which touched them in the remotest degree. A declaration of the king, made 28th March, 1764, prohibits all works on the subject of Finance. An authority so great, employed on this occasion, evidently shews, that the government considered it as dangerous to inform the public concerning their true state. It certainly proves, that liberty was utterly extinct in France, and that the most terrible despotism had taken place, since it had placed its talons on the presses of the kingdom, with the minutest vigilance. It not only seized on what had been printed, but prohibited what they should not write on. The declaration was no sooner made public, than all the minions of the Police were busy at ransacking the bookfellers shops.

The ministers persecute the Bookfellers.

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THERE

Bold appeal
to the peo-
ple.

THERE were not wanting at this moment, men of a daring spirit not inattentive to the reigning despotism, and the ministerial abuse of power. It is probable that some of these anonymous persons are now seated in the Convention. In 1763, several papers were found pasted up in various parts of Grenoble, the capital of Dauphiny, which bore the following address. The remonstrances of their Parliament were distinguished by their boldness.—“O FRANCE! O nation base and servile! In contemning the laws, thy Ministers ravish thy wealth to form chains for thee. And wilt thou patiently suffer it, unhappy people?”

ANOTHER publication was very closely hunted by the bloodhounds of the Police. It was a representation drawn up by the council of St. Domingo, where the Count d'Estaing, and the Prince of Rohan, had exercised the most cruel despotism. At the
moment

moment the judges were occupied in preparing their addressees, their court was surrounded, and twelve of these gentlemen dragged from the assembly into a dungeon. This representation gives a lively picture of tyranny exercised by both these governors. Their administration was dreadful beyond conception; every where the rights of citizens violated; justice abused and denied; the military supplying the place of the magistrates, and force substituted for law. As such a reclamation rendered the Prince of Rohan, odious to a degree of infamy, when the publication arrived at Paris, the family of the Rohans, addressed themselves to the minister; the work was immediately suppressed by the Police; and in a few days not a copy could be procured. It was thus no punishment could reach the Nobility; a publication against them was suppressed; and a suit was lost by the interference of the court. All, indeed, was derived from the

The Nobility are secure from every punishment.

Minister; he was the seven-mouthed Nile of corruption, which fed hundreds of inferior rivers.

Interesting
anecdotes of
Ministerial
persecution.

M. de la Chalotais, was one of the victims of that masculine eloquence, and ardent indignation which attacked the ministerial abuse of power. The ministers imprisoned him at Saint Maloes. In 1766, there appeared, for a little while, and very clandestinely, a small work, entitled "Memoirs of M. de la Chalotais, procureur general, au Parlement de Bretagne." It was written by himself in his cruel confinement, and displays his persecutions with an admirable force. He attributes them to M. Calonne, whom he paints in the darkest colours. Without dwelling on the particulars in this work, there is one circumstance which possesses the singular merit of a writer of eloquence, describing the most dismal situation humanity can well experience. He was refused every consolation,

consolation, even of that solitary one of books, pens, and ink. We are told, that these memoirs were written with a pen made out of a toothpick; of ink composed of water, foot, vinegar, and sugar; and on paper which had served as wrappers of sugar and chocolate. The author opens his memoirs in these words, "I am loaded with irons; I have invented a method to write my memoirs. I abandon them to the disposition of providence. If they should happen to fall into the hands of some honest citizen, I intreat him to present them to the king, if it is possible, and even to render them public for my own justification, and that of my son." Calonne answered this memoir, and the king even condescended to write his approbation of this reply with his own hand. This, no doubt, was a great satisfaction for Mr. Calonne; but the critics and the public were not so easily satisfied as his majesty. In a letter which Voltaire wrote to a friend at Paris,

he observes on the memoirs of Chalotais.—

“ I have read the memoirs of the unfortunate M. de Chalotais. Wretched is he whose unfeeling soul does not tremble with the shiverings of a fever in reading them. His toothpick engraves for immortality.—But, alas! the Parisians are cowardly, they groan, they sup, and forget every thing”.—It is not thus, however, any longer with the Parisians; I am afraid that they *remember too well*.

Anecdote of
a Prisoner
confined in
the Cage of
Saint Michel.

A congenial anecdote, is that relative to M. Deforges, an author who was more celebrated for his misfortunes, than his works. He was at the opera, in the year 1749, when the Pretender was arrested, in consequence of the treaty made with England. This act of violence appeared to our poet as a national disgrace, and breach of honour. He exhaled his poetic indignation in a phillipic, which had a great run at that time. It begun thus :

People,

Peuple, jadis si fier, aujourd'hui si servile,
Des princes malheureux vous n'etes plus l'asyle.

Nation! of late so bold, so servile now,
No more the asylum of unhappy monarchs.

His self-love could not preserve the incognito. He confided the secret to a friend, who betrayed his confidence. He was immediately seized, and without any further trial, conducted to the Mount of St. Michael, where he remained above three years in a *Cage*, which was not a fiction of fancy, but one of the terrible realities of despotism. It was (for I hope it is no more) a vault or cellar hewed in the rock, of eight feet in its square, where the unhappy victim sat, and only received the light from the remote crevices of the steps of the church. And this dreadful torture was inflicted on a fellow creature, because he wrote a few verses! The abbé of St. Michael sympathised in the fate of this unhappy man. After much intercession, he obtained an exchange of im-

P 4

prisonment;

prisonment; and M. Deforges was transported from the *Cage* to the abbey. It was with extreme precaution, and with great trouble, that the prisoner, so long accustomed to his profound obscurity, could suffer the light. At length this unhappy victim of ministerial vengeance, proved to be an ingenious, and virtuous character. He became the beloved friend of the family who had relieved him by the casual impulse of humanity. Heaven alone has registered the many ingenious and worthy men who have found a living grave in this *Cage*!

Anecdote of
one con-
fined twenty-seven
years in a
dungeon of
eight feet
square.

In Bachaumont's *Memoires Secrets*, is the following dreadful anecdote of ministerial vengeance, dated 25th February, 1781.—

There was lately in the castle of Ham, in Picardy, a man who has been there confined above twenty-seven years. He was placed in a dungeon of eight feet square; there laid on straw, surrounded by insects, reptiles, and the most loathsome animals, without fire,
without

without light, without cloaths, he cursed his existence. Two prisoners, having learnt the fate of this unhappy person, who was known to be a man of quality, wrote a pathetic letter to Mr. Necker. The next post brought an order to release this child of misfortune, and to restore him to light and life. He was conducted to a chamber, shaved, dressed, and his crime was to be investigated. But there is hardly a crime which could merit a punishment so cruel and lingering; and above all executed in so clandestine a manner. The fact appears, afterwards, that he was a young officer related to the Mazarine family, but who having expressed himself freely, at the inconsiderate age of twenty-four years, disappeared suddenly in the night! and afterwards passed twenty-seven years in the most excruciating manner it is possible to imagine!

One more instance may be given in the following mode in which the government
paid

Anecdote of
one imprisoned
by Ministers
because he
assisted them
with money

paid its debts. The Sieur Cleynman (a foreigner, and probably a German) a venerable father of a large family, aged sixty-three, was a creditor of France, to the amount of 1,800,00 livres, having furnished provisions and forages during the war. In 1768, he came to Paris to solicit payment for this large sum. After repeated applications and a continued residence at Paris, till the year 1778, he flattered himself that the government were preparing to satisfy his just claims. But on the night of the 13th April, 1779, the old man was transferred to the Bastille. There he remained for three years, without knowing the occasion of his detention, though it is pretty clear, that the minister, weary of his repeated solicitations, resolved in this manner, to get rid of the venerable creditor.

Imprisonment appears to have been the general punishment assigned by the government. There seems to have been no degrees

grees in the mode; the satirical song was treated with the same rigour as if the writer had been a national creditor; and the debt of a national creditor was treated like a song.

UNDER this head of ministers and their subalterns, the *Fermiers generaux*, offer to the reflecting mind, some of the most dreadful abuses, which can possibly exist in any government. These men consisted of a society of wealthy persons, who farmed the produce of the taxes, laid by the king on the nation. Whenever the bargain was struck with his majesty, *every minister* received a gift, called by the French, *un pot de vin*; which *pottle of wine*, consisted of the value of *one hundred thousand livres*. The favourite Sultana procured these places for her friends, or for those recommended by her friends, and as these ladies are peculiarly fond of this *kind* of wine, they drank, with great

An interesting sketch of the *Fermiers Generaux*.

great avidity, repeated *pottles*. To indemnify themselves for these presents, the *Fermiers generaux* oppressed the people by the severest levies. To save themselves from their excessive tyranny, the people often committed fraud, and to hinder them by the most terrible vigilance, the *Ferme Generale* were obliged to keep in pay an army of clerks, subalterns, scouts, and spies, amounting to the astonishing number of eighty thousand men!

From all this we may judge of the enormous expences which attended this vicious administration. These heavy charges it is certain fell on the king; for the *Fermier* in his agreement, always in taking on him the farming of any tax, deducted about a third from the supposed produce, under the pretence of fraud. But in fact, all the weight of the oppression fell on the people. Every *Fermier General*, acquired immense fortunes, and while the king and the people were alike

in

in a state of indigence, the coffers of these men overflowed with gold.

Too often these *Fermiers generaux* conducted by an insatiable cupidity, led themselves to the frauds practised on them. Every person detected in cheating the revenues, was condemned to pay a considerable pecuniary fine, which reverted to the *Fermiers* themselves. And such was the refined cruelty of these blood suckers of the nation, that they were continually laying traps for thoughtless people.

THE cupidity of these *Fermiers* was indeed so great, that they daily placed their lowest scouts, such as armed watchmen, chiefly on all the coasts of Normandy, to hinder the inhabitants from taking *sea-water*, which they might have been induced to use for its salty quality—that they might be obliged to buy their *salt* very dear at the established warehouses of the *Fermiers*!

Singular anecdote of the persecuting vigilance of the *Fermiers*.

Linguet's
forcible de-
scription of
the FERME.

THE *Fermiers generaux*, were furiously irritated against the celebrated Linguet, who, in one of his *Memoires*, has traced their character with a colouring and brilliancy rarely equalled; yet the representation is not less just. He thus describes the *different orders* of the FERME.

“ In the first hierarchy of the FERME, the offices are different, and the parts skilfully distributed. We shall not here notice those chiefs, who at an awful distance communicate motion to the whole machine, and whose only occupation is to make the contributions flow to their voluptuous residences, which their unnumberable armies unceasingly levy for their profit in all parts of the kingdom. Their *subalterns* only are now our object. These alone support the fatigue and danger of the expeditions, and whose ardour they are careful to keep alive in abandoning to them a small portion of the prey, when the seizures are advantageous. There are directors,

rectors, who imitate as much as they can, the immoveable and lucrative dignity of their masters. There are captains of banditti, who appropriate to themselves the honourable title of *Capitaines généraux*, &c. There are also the simple militia, known under the names of *gardes*, *commis*, and *employés*, who allow themselves to practice the most fraudulent manœuvres, under the pretext of hindering fraud, and continual violations, to prevent, they say, rebellion.

“ But it is not sufficient to have a pack of hounds to start the prey, and whippers-in to govern them ; the institutors of this administration have pushed their foresight and sagacity much further. Game has not always been found to hunt. They have therefore established in every department a kind of employ under favour of which they are certain never to fail of prey. It consists of giving birth to smuggling at their pleasure, to create fraud when it does not exist, and thus to prepare a

factitious seizure, but a real one to their *scouts*, when the prudence or timidity of traders reduces them to a long inactivity. These men are called in the language of the *Ferme, des Affides*, (the faithful). They are persons who undertake to run over the frontiers or coasts of the kingdom; they form intimacies with the proprietors of merchandise; they feign to become purchasers; they buy; they act precisely the part of those animals degraded by education, who betray their own kind for the service of their tyrants. The merchants too ardent, who suffer themselves to be seduced by their invitations, are insensibly lured into the net of the hunter; it is skilfully lowered; the decoy recovers its liberty to recommence its treasons, and the captive strangers in vain deplore the imprudence which has lost them.

This extract though somewhat long, we have given entire, that the reader may be enabled to judge by this energetic and lively picture

picture of the employments of the officers, or creatures of the *Ferme*. How hateful must such men have been to their fellow citizens! what an army who devoted themselves to offices of vexation, treachery, spying, to ruin the industrious, and to fatten on the substance of the unwary!

THESE financiers, and ministers, fully wanted whatever their eagerness could grasp at. The following anecdotes will display the laudable manner in which they dissipated their enormous accumulations. The act of gallantry we are noticing could have found no imitators but in a financier of the first rank; and, indeed, it was performed by the comptroller general.

Anecdotes of
the singular
luxuries of
Ministers,
&c.

In 1786, the annals of gallantry recorded this splendid offering of love. M. De Calonne, for a new year's gift, gave a favourite lady, a handful of pistachio nuts, wrapt

Q

up

up in *papillotes*; and in presenting them, he warned her not to destroy the *papillotes* without proper precaution. The lady wanted a comfit-box to contain the pistachios. The clever and enamoured minister offered her a superb gold box enriched with diamonds; but what was the surprise of his mistress when opening the box she found it full of new louis, and developing the papers discovered each of them to be a note of the Caisse d'Ecompte, for 300 livres!

Mademoiselle de Beauvoisin, had long captivated the heart of M. Baudard de Saint-James, treasurer of the marine. This magnificent minister having more money than taste, had spent on this Cyprian veteran enormous sums. He gave her, only in jewels and other presents, about eighteen hundred thousand livres, besides an annuity of sixty thousand livres. At her death the sale of her effects afforded a curious speculation to the fashionable circles; it was at-

tended by the ladies of quality, as well as those of pleasure. Among the curious articles were found two hundred rings, each rivalling the other in value; and her collection of loose diamonds, like the shop of a jeweller, were amassed in papers; there were above one hundred suits of the most elegant dresses, and linen of a superior quality than had yet been known. This sale made a great noise at Paris; and every frail one aspired to become the mistress of a minister. It may not, however, be improper to add, that this M. de Saint-James, (whose real name was *Saint-gemme*, but who had thus Anglicised it) shortly afterwards committed an act of bankruptcy, by a great deficiency in the national treasury, and terminated his horrid extravagancies by insanity.

The abbé Terrai, the scourge of France, ^{Luxury of the Abbé Terrai} held for his maxim, that every thing in the state belonged to the king, and he oppressed the people by the most despotic and ex-

Q 2

cruciating

cruciating torture. We shall be better acquainted with him when we come to his character. At the very moment this odious minister was the public execration, and that it became this unevangelical prelate to have some little discretion and modesty, with fearless intrepidity he insulted France by a display of unparalleled luxury. At the important crisis, when he was quitting the administration, he built a palace, which is described as remarkable for its cost, as well as its elegance. The furniture, and every appendage of ornament and utility, presented whatever could irritate desire, enchant imagination, and above all, characterise the taste of this immodest and shameless prelate. Among his curiosa of voluptuousness, at the head of his bed was placed a naked Grace. When his friends joked with him on the scandalous ornament, he replied, *c'est le Costume!* that is, it was necessary for the lady whom he honoured with his evangelical embraces,

embraces, to imitate the unveiled beauties of the exquisite model.

M. de Senac, a fermier general, in paying Singular folly of a Fermier General. an unexpected visit to a lady of pleasure, was informed that she was engaged with Mr. Jolis, a dancer. Tell your mistress, said he to the maid, that a fermier general will not suffer with impunity a disappointment. The lady, however, sacrificing every thing to love, persisted in her engagement, and the fermier general departed burning with indignation. He resolved to revenge himself, and that this revenge should be the resentment of a fermier general. Pride was stronger within him than jealousy, and he substitutes contempt for hatred. With a design of making our Phryne ashamed of her conduct, he sends her one hundred louis and a silver warming pan, as a present (says Manuel) to assist her in her lying-in! This was the most glorious moment in the life of M. de Senac!

M. Dangé, a fermier general, on the

Q 3

evening

A Fermier
General dies
in the most
voluptuous
manner.

evening before his death, received visits in the most pompous manner. His apartment was embellished with every kind of luxury. Seated on a rich sofa and dressed in a robe de chambre, which floated around him, shining with the most curious embroidery, and buttoned with a diamond of uncommon size, he talked of quitting the world in the gayest manner possible. But this was not the effect of true philosophy, so much as of that apathy which had ever rendered his soul dead to every touch of sensibility; and, therefore, the more adapted for that of a financier. He made his nephew his *Legataire universel*, on condition of his paying *five millions* in legacies; which his heir very cheerfully did. The remainder of his fortune amounting to *eight millions*—So that our financier died worth *Thirteen millions!*

Among the extra charges made to government in the department of foreign affairs, was one consisting of gratifications given to
ambassadors,

ambassadors, in occasions where they were obliged to pay any secret correspondence, &c. These presents, it was publicly reported at Paris, when Vergennes was in office, were actually given towards the pin-money of Madame Vergennes, and it is not improbable. There is a degree of ministerial corruption which has long past the modesty of blushing. The predecessors of Vergennes made Louis XV. pay the pensions they accorded to their mistresses. The miserly duke of Praslin placed his favourite Mademoiselle Dangeville, on the marine list, for twenty thousand livres. The *abbé* Terrai charged among the extra expences of government, a sum of one hundred and fifty thousand livres for his *angel* Madame de la Garde. Such were the ministerial abuses! and the *wives* and *mistresses* of ministers, were charged in the *national expences*.

The Mistresses of the Ministers charged in the national expences.

M. de la Borde, one of this honourable

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confra-

An interesting description of a beautiful English Garden of a Financier.

confraternity, displayed a degree of opulence and taste, in one of his extravagant undertakings, which would have been worthy of a Cræsus. The description of his *English garden*, astonishes by the vastness of its cost, and enchants by the variety of its scenery. Let us enter a moment into this fairy wilderness. The spot on which he first formed the conception, appeared to be the most unfavourable possible; an extensive marshy ground; a turfy earth surrounded by mountains, and crossed by the river d'Etampes. The Financier said let there be a garden, and there was a garden.—To give to this loose and muddy bottom, a proper firmness, was the first command, and instantly about *four hyndred labourers* were employed to trench a mountain, to smooth its fragments, and to spread it in a layer, after having cleared away the first bed of the marsh, of its slime and mire. This marshy earth was then thrown over the smooth bed of the mountain

mountain which had disappeared; and the mingled soils produced one, equally adapted for the future plantations. The river which run in a straight line, assumed that of Hogarth's line of beauty, and devolved its waters in a serpentine brightness. They were skilfully conducted, and were seen falling down the rocks into a magnificent basin, and then passing under an immense artificial bridge, formed of irregular pieces of rock. They sometimes rolled into little cascades, by subterraneous grottoes, where the velvet turf invited repose. Without, its brightness attracted the eye, and sometimes its thunders engaged the ear. Within, confused murmurs lulled with their softness, and at a further distance to vary the sensations of the traveller, a solemn silence prevailed.

In another place the soul was agitated by terror and alarm. The rocks piled above one another, in a gloomy light, discovered their pointed and threatening fragments; every thing

thing appears in a crumbling state, and every breeze echoing through hollow arches, seemed to bring with it a wound or death.

More agreeable scenes delighted the imagination. The way was not long to Elysian beauties and softer views. Floating islands displayed their variegated charms, and the *coups d'oeil*, were liberally scattered about the lawns and green allies. A hill blinded the view from his *Chateau* of a charming landscape. The art of a Financier, could easily vanquish nature; the four hundred labourers are called, and the hill becomes a plain! M. de la Borde, spent on this *English garden* about *five millions*.—The cost was enormous, and the taste was exquisite. But at the same time, France was crowded with living skeletons; with *millions of men* wanting a little bread.

Observations on the horrid luxuries of court Bankers, &c.

Above fifty years (writes the sensible writer of the *Lettres Historiques*, &c.) about five bankers of the court, have succeeded each

each other. Their fortunes are supposed to amount to, at least, *two hundred millions*; an equal sum must be added for the charges they have incurred, and the money they have given to their protectors. If *five bankers* have gained, in fifty years, four hundred millions, it is not difficult to find, by the rule of three, from whence arises the vast national debt. The metropolis has long seen the vain pomp which M. De Beaujon, the court banker displays; what we are told of Lucullus, is nothing in comparison of the prodigalities of this modern Plutus; a royal palace offers nothing similar to what he calls his hermitage. It is in the midst of a people weighed down by the pressure of the most horrid misery, that an individual dares to insult the nation by so monstrous a luxury. The government cannot, and dares not, reform such abuses; its continual want of money obliges it to spare these Financiers, who alone enjoy unbounded credit, and who,
in

in a moment of crisis, furnish the money required, and make their conditions according to the urgency of the necessities of the government. You conceive, after this succinct statement, what is the cause of the disorder which prevails in our finances, and the impossibility in which the government is to extricate itself from the grasp of these harpies.

In another place he observes. The Financiers have the greatest power in the French government. It is they who can feed the eternal cravings of the royal treasury; but it is also they who are hourly ruining the state. Since the days of Sully and Colbert, France has never had an *exact balance* of its real situation; not one controller general has given a *true* one. I do not even except the *compte rendu* of Mr. Necker. In that account, or rather romance, we find nothing concerning those secret charges of the court, those gratifications,

and those gifts which we know are made daily. Those open loans which have existed above these fifteen years, and continually used, are not even mentioned. They *hide* from the *king* and the *nation*, the ruined state of the finances; because it is this disorder which is *necessary* to enrich the *administrators* and to *keep in pay* that multitude of *protectors* on whom the *ministers* depend."—What a striking representation is this of the ruin of the finances, and the chain of corruption which connected the various parts of government! And to what amounts the whole? A few voluptuous and wicked state vermin preying on the vitals of the public, and eating the people's subsistence for their bread. Men devoid of sensibility, wrenching the morsel of the peasant and the citizen, wet with their tears. And to what purpose? To bribe others; to enrich themselves; and to levy new taxations.

THAT

Singular
seduction of
a Financier
to delude the
minds of the
people.

THAT the French ministers of state, like the rest of that *fraternity*, frequently deluded the people, and set afloat in the current of popular credulity, many modes to seduce and gratify them is very probable. But the following anecdote is so singular, and one would think improbable, that since we cannot pass it over, it will be necessary to give our authority. It is to be found in the *Lettres Historiques, Politiques, et Critiques*, vol. IV. p. 176.

D'Alembert (says the letter writer) shewed a letter which a statesman had written to him, and who, while he asks his advice, begs him to revise and digest a preamble to a decree, which might *seduce the people*, and make them *admire* what they read, without however, being enabled to *understand* any thing. These are the words of the man in office. “ *Je ne veux point admettre dans les arrêts du conseil un vrai trivial et une clarté trop familière. Je veux un vrai de recherche, une clarté elegante, une naïvete fine, toute brillante*

brillante de termes pompeux, relevés inopinément de phrases arrondies, de vocatifs intermediaires, et d'adverbes indefinis." I will not admit in the decrees of council, a *common truth*, and familiar clearness. I wish to have a *truth of research*, an elegant clearness, a refined simplicity, brilliant with pompous expression, unexpectedly heightened by rounded phrases, intermediate vocatives, and indefinite adverbs.—This is a very curious specimen of the dreadful abuse of eloquence. I am not a metaphysician, and should be glad to understand the distinction between *un vrai trivial*, and *un vrai de recherche*. There is no doubt in these mysterious expressions something more than meets the ear. An *honest man*, however, knows only *one kind of truth*.

ANOTHER singular anecdote, but a more probable one concerning the American war, is given by the abovementioned writer, vol. I.

Interesting
anecdote of
the American
war.

p. 204. It proves that because the commercial speculations of the ministers and their subalterns would be ruined, if a peace had taken place; the war in 1777, between England and France was the result of their individual interests. These are his words.

“ The war in which we are going to be plunged, is the consequence of a simple mercantile speculation. Several of our ministers have made among themselves an act of co-partnership, in the commerce of America. The first expeditions proved very profitable; but as they have a considerable outstanding fund, they will not dissolve their partnership, before they are reimbursed for their advances and receive the profits, which are to arise according to the calculations they have made. Peace would overturn all their speculations, and ruin the lenders of the various funds. It is necessary to inform you, that the expences, &c. of the establishment amount to an enormous sum. First of all must be paid

paid, their directors; their book-keepers; the under clerks; then follow the *mistresses of the ministers*; their sons or daughters; brothers, cousins, and even their grandchildren; then those who *lend their name* to this speculation; courtiers and protectors. When this world is paid, ministers are to gain, notwithstanding all this, cent per cent. Then calculate the inferior profits, which must be made before the net balance. Perhaps you think I am not serious; I assure you I have known several of these *protégés* of a minister, who, at first had only a salary of six thousand livres, and who now enjoy an income of one hundred thousand, and have become lords of two or three manors. A first clerk told me in November 1777, "If peace took place at this moment, my principal would be ruined, and I too. We have all our fortune in America, and we wait for it with impatience."

"This is the reason for which the king has not yet declared for the Americans; he will

R

only

only do this when the ships we expect are safely arrived."

Such is the anecdote which this writer has given! If it is authentic, it must excite the indignation of every honest man, when he reflects that the profits of a set of unfeeling merchants, leagued with corrupt ministers, can thus interfere with the prosperity of nations! Some will not easily conceive that armies rushing on each other; and cities devoted to the sword and the flames, have found their origin in causes still more minute than a banditti of merchants complotting in their compting houses! It has been said that the war in 1757, between France and Prussia was occasioned by a critical *bon mot*, which Frederic pointed at some *verses* of Cardinal de Bernis! Because Dr. Franklin was not used at court with the attention his merits required, we are told, that was the cause of his inveterate hatred against England, and his indignation might probably have urged him

him to realise his well known menace ;
 hence, perhaps, the independence of America! / 27
 How often have the most trivial points of
etiquette produced long and desolating wars !

It was not only between ministers and
 merchants, that such shameful practices ex-
 isted, but if we are to credit the following
 anecdote, Louis XV. was a *stock jobber*.

When M. Bertin was minister, he was
 agent for the *exchanges* of this *monarch*; it
 was him who had the care of his majesty's
 savings. He did his stock-jobbing business
 very profitably by buying on the spot, good
 paper at six and seven per cent, according
 to the scarcity of money. One day he pro-
 posed to Louis XV. an operation of several
 millions.—“ Sire,” said he to the *royal*
stock-jobber, “ The *royal bills* lose a great
 deal in the place; their discount is now
 considerable; it is the moment to buy several
 millions. I am certain they will rise,
 and that there must follow a considerable

R 2

profit

profit in a short time.”—“*That paper,*” replied the PRUDENT monarch—“*is not to be depended upon; the risk is too great!*”—It was *his own paper* of which he was talking!

WHEN the well known Cagliostro was in London, he wrote a letter to a friend at Paris, which excited considerable attention. It describes the horrible despotism of French ministers, and gives a picture of the interior of the Bastille. The following paragraphs merit preservation.

“ My boldness has irritated your minister. He did not chuse that a foreigner under the locks and bolts of the Bastille, should, as I have done, discovered his agents, and his principles, to the French tribunal; the nation, the king, and all Europe—

The nation
at the mercy
of ministers.

“ —Your persons and your properties are at the mercy of the minister alone. It is not difficult to deceive his majesty, by representations

tations artfully calumniating, and never possible to contradict, to obtain a Lettre de Câchet by surprise; to expedite and execute in a moment; to plunge the innocent in a dungeon, and give up his house to pillagers.

“ When the king signs, he reposes on the report of his minister; and on what does this minister rely? On unknown complaints, or dark informations, which are never communicated; too often on simple reports, calumniating conjectures, sowed by hatred and gathered by envy. The victim is stricken, without knowing from whence the blow comes; happy if the minister has no personal enmity.

“ Do all the state prisons resemble the Bastille? You have no conception of its horrors. The cynical impudence, the odious falsehood, the false pity, the bitter irony, the merciless cruelty, injustice and death—all these reign in these dungeons. A bar-

A description of the interior of the Bastille.

barous silence is the least of the crimes there committed.

“ I was more than six months, not above the distance of twenty feet from my wife, and I was ignorant of it. Others have been entombed above thirty years, and have been supposed dead, and were unfortunate because they were not! Not having, like the damned of Milton, any other light in their abyss, than what is necessary to perceive the impenetrable thickness of the gloom that surround them; they would be alone in the universe, if the eternal did not exist. Yes, my friend, I have said a captive, and free I repeat; what crime is there which is not fully expiated by a month in the Bastille?

“ You, Frenchmen! have every thing to render you happy, a fertile soil, a soft climate, a good heart, a charming gaiety, and genius embellished by the graces: you are adapted for all things; without an equal in
the

the art of pleasing; without masters in others; you only want, my good friends, a small matter; that is, to sleep with security in your beds."

The count, (if the count wrote this energetic epistle) finishes by a remarkable sentence, which every honest man will warmly address to the *present Frenchmen*---"*Changés enfin d'opinion, et mérités la liberté par la Raison.*" Change, at length your opinions, and deserve LIBERTY by the means of REASON,

IN the "Lettres Historiques, Politiques et Critiques sur les Evenemens qui se sont passés depuis 1778 jusqu'à présent," there is one dated July 1780. The following extract describes the state of the nation at that period, and the present revolution has confirmed the sagacity and judgment of the writer.

"I have no doubt that the French are attached to their sovereign; but you are ill advised in what passes in the interior of
R 4 France,

Singular observations on
ministers,
written in
1780.

France, as well as of the dispositions of those who reside in the country, whose ignorance is not such as you suppose. I have frequently travelled throughout the kingdom, and have been astonished at the enlightened state of the people. *It is not with the KING that they are dissatisfied, but with his* MINISTERS; they see with indignation the despotism exercised by them under the name of the monarch. I was surprised to find in the suburbs and villages the lowest people who were perfectly instructed of the American revolution, and the causes which occasioned it. The inhabitants of cities, still more enlightened, are for the greater part REPUBLICANS; it is above all in commercial towns that the spirit of independence manifests itself most: you form no conception of the freedom with which they speak, and of the manner which they censure all the operations of the government. They are highly incensed at the *PRE-ROGATIVES* accorded to the NOBILITY, and
CLERGY;

CLERGY, of that croud of PRIVILEGES which these two orders enjoy, as well as all those who purchase titular offices, which exempt them from contributing to the wants of the state.

NATIONAL

NATIONAL LEVITY.

The people
furnished,
but are pro-
vided with
fairs.

PANEM et Circensem, Bread and Theatres; such was the motto of the Roman people, and such apparently was long that of the French nation. This may be supposed by an ordinance of the police, made the 14th of April 1784, and published with the sound of trumpets. At the moment the parliament was making remonstrances concerning the dearness of flour, and on the immediate necessity of giving bread for a vast number of the famishing poor, the government also watched over the pleasures of the populace. In this ordinance, which relates to Merry-Andrews, Pantaloons, Rope-dancers, and other exhibitions of the fair at the Boulevards, or environs of Paris, it is declared, that these
amusements,

amusements, being made for the people, to refresh them from their labours, and hinder the dreadful effects of idleness and intemperance; it being necessary to put them at a rate which does not exceed their ability, the managers of their vagabond troops are forbidden to raise their first seats to a higher price than three livres; their second to twenty-four sols; their third to twelve; and their fourth to six. All this might have been very laudable, if the people were not absolutely starving at the moment these amusements were given to them.

The following anecdote will amply serve to characterise the national frivolity; it is too amusing to apologise for its minute detail.

Singular anecdote of a law suit of the ladies hair dressers

IN January 1769, an important cause was brought forwards in the highest court of judicature. This cause was of a most extraordinary nature, and the prevailing topic of conversation. It was bought with great avidity, and

and was at once to be found on the dusky desks of the lawyers, and the brilliant toilettes of the ladies. It was entitled, "For the "*coiffeurs de dames* of Paris, against the " corporation of master-barbers, hair-dressers, " and bagnio-keepers." It is proper to observe, that the bagnio-keepers generally dressed the ladies' hair after bathing.

Those hair-dressers, who presumed to dress both sexes, in this case, maintained that it was their exclusive privilege to dress the ladies; and indeed they had several of their adversaries imprisoned or fined, &c. These, in their turn, defended themselves, and pretended that the exclusive privilege was in their favour; because, first, the art of dressing ladies' hair is a *liberal art*, and foreign to the profession of the *maitres perruquiers*; secondly, that the statute of the *perruquiers* does not give them the pretended exclusive right; and, thirdly, that they have hitherto oppressed them, and are indebted,

indebted to them in considerable damages and interests.

It is probable that some able pleader amused himself in drawing up this memoir. This frivolous case is conducted with art and elegance, and every where discovers the playful hand of a master, who perhaps thus unbended himself in the midst of more painful avocations. It will gratify the reader's curiosity to extract some of these brilliant passages.

In his first division the orator, who makes his clients speak in their own persons, maintains that the art of dressing the ladies' hair is a liberal art; and compares it to those of the poet, the painter, and the statuary. "By those talents," say they, "which are peculiar to ourselves, we give new graces to the beauty who is sung by the poet; it is when she comes from under our hands that the painter and the statuary represent her; and if the locks of Berenice have been placed among the stars, who will deny that

Curious panegyric on the art of hair-dressing

" to

“ to attain this superior glory she was first in
“ want of our aid?

“ A forehead more or less open, a face
“ more or less oval, require very different
“ modes; every where we must embellish
“ Nature, or correct its deficiencies. It is
“ also necessary to conciliate with the colour
“ of the flesh, that of the dress which is to
“ beautify it. This is the art of the painter;
“ we must seize with taste the variegated
“ shades; we must employ the *chiar’ oscuro*,
“ and the distribution of the shadows to give
“ more spirit to the complexion, and more
“ expression to the graces. Sometimes the
“ whiteness of the skin will be heighten-
“ ed by the auburn tint of the locks, and the
“ too lively splendour of the fair will be
“ softened by the greyish cast with which we
“ tinge the tresses.”

In another place to prove that their art has
claims to genius, the *coiffeurs de dames* add,

“ If the arrangement of the hair, and the
various

various colours we give the locks, do not answer our intention, we have under our hands the brilliant treasures of Golconda. To us, belongs the happy disposition of the diamonds; the placing the pearl pins, and the suspending of the feathers. The general of an army, knows what reliance he can make on a *half moon*, (a term of the then fashionable dress) placed in front; he has his engineers, who are distinguished by their titles; and we with a sparkling cross advantageously placed, know how difficult it is for an enemy not to yield. It is we, indeed, who strengthen and extend the empire of beauty."

Several legal discussions now follow, the aridity of which, do not permit our gay pleader to take his happy flights. But he appears with all his felicity of imagination in the peroration.

After having informed us that there exist above 1200 *coiffeurs de dames* at Paris, he thus closes his oration.

Defence of
hair-dressing

‘ Some rigid censurers will, perhaps say, that they could do very well without us, and that, if there were less art and ornaments at the toilettes of the ladies, things would be all for the better. It is not for us to judge, if the manners of Sparta were preferable to those of Athens; and if the shepherdess who gazes on herself in the glassy fountain, interweaves some flowers in her tresses, and adorns herself with natural graces, merits a greater homage than those brilliant citizens, who skilfully employ the refinements of a fashionable dress. We must take the age in the state we find it. We feel a congenial disposition to the living manners, to which we owe our existence, and while they subsist, we must subsist with them.’

Shortly afterwards, the case in favour of the *coiffeurs*, was ordered to be suppressed, as unworthy of the majesty of the tribunal to which the suit was brought. The *coiffeurs*, however, gained their cause against the Per-
ruquiers,

rûquiens, and the Graces triumphed over the
 Monster of Chicanery. The ladies had taken
 a warm interest in their favour, and formed
 for them most powerful solicitations. This
 important trial was crowded by a most brilliant
 assemblage, and when the grave decisions of
 the court were finally made, it was approved
 by a sudden clapping of hands from the anxious
 beauties of Paris, who considered the affair of
 their *coiffeurs*, as of the most national con-
 sequence.

The ladies
 interest
 themselves
 in favour of
 their hair-
 dressers.

If these anecdotes forcibly characterise the
 levity of the nation, the following one, per-
 haps, can only find its parallel in the annals
 of the effeminate city of Sybaris.

A patent ob-
 tained for
 loading
 silken um-
 brellas
 in passing
 over a bridge
 to defend
 the bearers
 against the
 heat.

In September 1769, there was formed an
 establishment, which had obtained an ex-
 clusive *privilege*, to have silken umbrellas, for
 the purpose of furnishing those who felt them-
 selves incommoded by the heat of the sun,
 during their walk over the *Pont Neuf*! Offices

S

were

were erected at the extremities of this bridge, where the voluptuous *petit maitres*, who were fearful of spoiling their complexions, provided themselves with this light and useful machine, and left them at the office on the opposite side, for which they paid two liards. It will be acknowledged, that this Speculator was profound and sublime in his national views, and surely the Government was not inferior, when they granted him their *letters patent* for those *umbrellas*! It displays, however, the industrious ingenuity of a needy Frenchman, when his wit is even greater than his wants.

Satyrical
couplets on
the nation.

In January 1772, all Paris appeared interested in the following satyrical couplets. Pleasant as they may appear to us, the Government made very serious enquiries after their Author, who would have found a ready furnished lodging for the winter, in some apartment in the Bastille.

I

Chantons

Chantons dans un badin vaudeville
 Le retour des vertus qu'on aura,
 L'honneur gothique à la cour, à la ville;
 Le sentiment, qu'on trouve de vieux style;
 Cela reviendra.

François, ne perdés pas l'esperance,
 Tout va bien, tout encor mieux ira;
 La liberté, le credit, l'abondance,
 La candeur, les jesuites, l'innocence
 Cela reviendra.

Tout revient, la pudeur, le courage;
 La gaieté, les moeurs, et cætera:
 Je fais meme une demoiselle sage,
 Qui disoit, en perdant son pucelage,
 Cela reviendra.

Let us sing a playful vaudeville,
 The return of the virtues we shall have;
 The Gothic honour at the court and city,
 The Sentiment, that is now become obsolete,
 All will return.

Frenchman lose no hopes,
 All is well, and all will be better.
 Liberty, credit, and abundance,
 Candour, the Jesuits, and Innocence,
 All will return.

All will return, Modesty and Courage,
 Gaiety, morals et cætera,
 I know even a wise young lady who said
 When she had lost the precious gift of nature,
 All will return.

AT an entertainment given by the Duke of Aiguillon, a sweetmeat, representing the various parts of Europe, over which his ministry extended, was placed in the centre of the desert. The Duke offered some of it to the Viscountess de Fleury, to take her choice. This lady, after the usual carelessness of a pretty woman, when she has to chuse a sweetmeat, said, then my Lord Duke give me FRANCE; I can *devour* it as well as another.

Remarkable
repartee of
Diderot.

SOMETIMES these frivolites were checked by the solemn voice of a philosopher, when at the tables of the great, a philosopher did not lose his voice. Diderot, it is well known, was honoured by the favours of the Empress of Russia, and was considered as her literary agent at Paris. Diderot had long worn mourning; which modest dress he considered as not ill adapted for the character he assumed, as a man of letters. The Count de Broglie, a *petit maitre*, and a poor wit, attempted to ridicule

dicule him for the black coat which he affected to prefer for his dress. He asked him, if he was in mourning for the Russians? Sir, replied the philosopher, if I had to wear mourning for a nation, I should *not* go far to seek for one.

We shall, for a moment, display the *bizarre* fashions, which were continually changing at Paris; the residence of every species of fashionable folly.

Curious
anecdotes of
Parisian
fashion.

It will not be improper to preface these anecdotes, by the following description of the Parisians, which was written in 1715, by the great Montesquieu. From which it will appear, that the French nation has long been characterised for its volatility of taste in dress. They have only shewn constancy, in the inconstancy of their character.

“ I find, (says Rica, in the Persian Letters) that the caprice of fashion with the French, is astonishing. They have forgot

how they were drest this summer; they are still more ignorant how they shall be drest next winter; of what use were it to send you an exact description of their cloaths, and their dress. A novel fashion would come and destroy my work, as that of their workmen; and before you would receive my letter, all would be changed,

“ A lady, who quits Paris for a six months retirement, returns as ancient, as if she had been out of the world for thirty years.

“ Sometimes the head dress mount gradually, till a sudden revolution flattens them. There was a time when their immense height placed the face of a woman in the midst of herself. At another, it was the feet which occupied this place, for the high heels were a kind of pedestals, which kept them in the air. Builders have been often obliged to raise, lower, and widen the doors, according as the Ladies dresses required.”

We shall now communicate to the reader,
a few

a few anecdotes, which, among many, we select, as no unamusing specimens of a *national levity*, unknown to any part of Europe, but the French nation, *before* their Revolution.

AMONG the curious extravagancies of France, Singular extravagancies in fashion. was the singular fashion, of wearing square hats, or hats with four points. It prevailed in 1776. This grotesque covering, was used by the petit maitres for their morning dishabille. Shortly afterwards, some innovators introduced a novelty of hats, with *two* points; this did not prosper. The English flouched hats, at length, prevailed above the rest. All these fashions existed in the course of one year. The Duke de Richelieu dismissed his valet, because he gave him a hat with four points, instead of two.

Dress was often carried to such an excessive extravagance, that the frivolous themselves could not help, sometimes expressing their astonishment. Thus, in the year 1781, when

the Thuilleries formed the spot of fashionable resort, it exhibited a theatre of such *bizarre* scenes, that a Hogarth might have been taught new lessons, and have given us the genius of the nation, from his representations of the ridiculous, with which they abounded. The metropolis was crowded by too many idlers, not to have some singular and extravagant ones. Among several of these extravaganzas, I shall give two of either sex. A young man appeared in a coat, waistcoat, breeches, and stockings, of the colour of *merde d'oie*; (a dark bottle green) his shoes, and his hat strings, were also of the same colour; and to reach the summit of extravagance, his hair was powdered with *merde d'oie*. This original, soon attracted a crowd; and the Swiss was obliged to desire our little fop of the *merde d'oie*, to retreat.

Not long after, a lady elegantly dressed, appeared at the same place in a riding habit, and with a man's hat, holding it in her hand, or taking it off at pleasure. No lady before this,
it

it appears, wore an habit, for this female singularity attracted admirers ; but, like her male predecessor the fop, she was civilly desired to wear another hat, or not walk in the Thuilleries.

It is not only by the eternal mutation of fashion, but by its extravagance, that the Parisians of those days are to be distinguished. No sooner a mode appeared, but the futility, levity, and fury of the petit maitres, made it degenerate into the most whimsical extravagance. In 1786, reigned the mania of buttons; they not only wore them of an enormous size, as large as crown pieces, but they painted on them minatures, and other pictures; so that a set of buttons was often valued at an incredible price. Some of these petit maitres, wore the modest medals of the twelve Cæsars; others, antique statues; and others, the metamorphosis of Ovid. At the Palais Royal, a cynic was seen, who impudently wore on his buttons, above thirty figures from Aretin, so
that

*Anecdotes
of fashion-
able mania.*

that every modest woman (if there was a modest woman in Paris) must have been obliged to turn away from this eccentric libertine. The young men, imitated the romantic fancy of the ancient knights of chivalry, and wore on their buttons the cypher of their mistress; and the Parisian wits, exercised their puny talents by forming with the letters of the alphabet, insipid rebusses. In a word, the manufacture of buttons was a work of imagination; which wonderfully displayed the genius of the artist, and the purchaser, and which offered an inexhaustible source for conversation.

To this fashionable extravagance succeeded in the same year, that of the waistcoats. These became a capital object of luxury in dress. They had them by dozens, and by hundreds; as they had shirts. They exhibited the fancy of the wearer, by their fine paintings, and they were enriched by the most costly ornaments. Among the variety of subjects they offered

offered to the eye, a number of amorous and comic scenes were drawn; vine-gatherers, hunters, &c. ornamented the chests of the *elegans*; and over the belly of an effeminate trifler was seen a regiment of cavalry. One of these amateurs, delighted with finer fancies, had a dozen of these waistcoats painted, to represent the finest scenes in *Richard Cœur de Lion*, and the reigning operas of the day; that his wardrobe might become a learned repository of the drama, and perpetuate its happiest scenes!

These anecdotes, exhibit a representation of such extreme levity, and frivolous refinement, that in a True Briton, who has never travelled out of his own neighbourhood, they must excite not less surprise than contempt.

In 1774, a head-dress was brought in vogue by some adulative courtiers, which was called "The caps of the present time." But they had more of agreeable fancy than historic truth. They consisted of two horns of abundance,

dance, richly loaded with golden ears of corn, hung not ungracefully down the sides. This dress, which as may be imagined, was invented at Versailles, was little relished at Paris, when flour was daily rising in price, and while the unhappy people gazed on the beautiful ornaments of golden wheat ears, they were wanting bread.

Of the levity of the French, exemplified in their jeu de mots, &c.

The sellers of snuff-boxes, to excite the taste of the amateurs, who incessantly were calling for novelties, ingeniously invented *flat boxes*, which they, therefore, called their *Platitudes*. The drollness of their title, soon gave them a great run. The Duchess of Bourbon, one day, went to one of the most fashionable shops, and asked for *Turgotines*; the master appeared surprised, and ignorant of the article she wished to have. Boxes, like these, replied the Duchess, in pointing to those of the new construction. Madam, those are *Platitudes*, he answered; yes! yes!

it

it is all the same thing, said the Dukes. What was the consequence of this impertinence of the Dukes of Bourbon? It afforded a new topic for the circles of Paris; the name of Turgot, remained to these flat boxes; and every body hastened to buy his *Turgotine*, or his *Platitude*.

A play on words, was often an extreme favourite. One of these was called *Les Tout*; under this quirk or joke, four august personages were well enough characterised. It was thus, the *king* saves *all*; the *queen* spends *all*; *mon-sieur* buys *all*; and the *Count d'Artois*, laughs at *all*. On dit, que le Roi, epargne tout; que la Reine depense tout; que Monsieur achete tout; et que le Comte d'Artois se moque de tout.

In January 1763, the fashionable topic of Paris, was a handsome Dutch lady, whose name was Mrs. *Pater*. She was the wife of a
Dutch

Dutch merchant ; she formed the conversation of every polite circle, and the subject of innumerable epigrams and madrigals. The following one is among the tolerable ones ; the French, it seems, did not spare their most sacred topics, on the most frivolous matters.

Pater, est dans notre Cité ;
Spiritus, je voudrois bien etre,
 Et pour former la *Trinité*
Filius on en verroit naître.

The nobility walked to her house in a procession, observes a satyrical wit of the day. The honest Dutchman, her husband, fatigued with these honourable visits, said one day to the courtiers, in accompanying them to the door: " Gentlemen, I am very sensible of the honour you do me in visiting me ; but I think that you will find here little amusement, I spend the whole day with Mrs. Pater, and we sleep together at night !—Mrs. Pater, however, proved at last, a *belle Infidelle*.

THE

THE funeral oration of the queen of Louis XV. was made by the bishop of Puy, at Saint Denis. It was a very cold composition. When somebody present complained of the great heat before the Abbé de Voisenon, this Abbé replied, notwithstanding he was an Abbé, and the oration was a ceremony of religion, at the moment the corpse of the queen was in the church. This is astonishing, you have the cold breezes of Puy; a country as temperate as the bishop himself. This poor pun, exposed our bishop for above two years, to the severity of the frivolous circles of Paris. He was obliged to bury himself in his diocese; and because of this pun, hardly ever ventured to appear in public.

THE levity of the French, was not confined to the Parisians; it spread far and wide, and was not less observable in the remote Provinces. When the Duchess of Chartres came to her provincial city; on her first arrival,

she

The provincial French infected with the same levity as the Parisians.

she only appeared in a kind of bonnet, unadorned with that magnificence and multiplicity of feathers, which the ladies, in imitation of those of Paris, wore. This modest head-dress of the Duchefs, was a cause of exultation to the good husbands, who had long protested against the new fashion. The ladies of Chartres, were perfectly in despair on the occasion, as they considered it as a due compliment to their Duchefs to imitate her dress; and for this purpose, it appeared necessary to quit their beloved feathers. Matters remained in this dubious state for a week; when the Duchefs having recovered from a violent cold (which had been the only reason of her modest head-dress) she appeared at the theatre with a tree of feathers on her head. The honest husbands beheld this menacing *coiffure* with grief; and an universal joy was felt on this triumphal occasion by the ladies of Chartres. The next day, the shops were emptied of their feathers! This trifling anecdote is very proper

per, to shew the genius of such a nation of triflers ; the provinces, it seems, had not a less infectious air than Paris itself.

In 1777, We find that the hair dressing of ladies was so important and increasing an art, that it became necessary to augment the number of the artists of these edifices of beauty. In consequence of this, a *declaration* was given at Versailles, the 18th August, and registered in the *Parliament*, that *six hundred ladies hair-dressers*, should be admitted to the company of *Maitres Barbiers-Perruquiers*. The price of their admission, was fixed at six hundred livres. Besides this company, there were hair-dressers for the ladies of the lower class of people, and the *Bourgeoises*; the talents of those we are noticing, were to be devoted only to illustrious and brilliant heads.

But the affairs of these ladies hair-dressers, became more *serious* in the year 1780. Their *order* was augmenting at every hour, and they

The government issued a decree respecting the quarrels of the hair-dressers.

T

formed

formed one of the most important bodies at Paris. Proud of the daily favours they enjoyed, and giddy with their pride, they openly shewed their utmost contempt for the rest of their honourable confraternity. Barbers and wig-combers, they considered as unworthy peers, and attempted to separate themselves from such ignoble associates. They even pretended, that they had a just right to be joined to some scientific corps. This imperious rivalry, and the lamentable groans of the barbers, became an object for the government's vigilance. Another decree was issued from the king, dated 24th January, which fixed their number to six hundred; prohibits their having more than one apprentice every three years, to keep *schools* of hair-dressing; and above all, to place under the signs, the words, *Academie de Coiffeurs!*

In 1783, a satyrical vaudeville appeared by M. Chamcenets, intituled, "The Young

Men of the Age!" The Chevalier de Roucherolles, recognising himself in the description, said, that the Author deserved to be caned. This came to the ears of the poet, who immediately asked satisfaction from the Count. They fought, and slightly wounded each other. The bard, crowned with laurels, did not fail to shew himself at the opera that evening, with his arm in a sling. This circumstance, made the verses more popular than they would probably have otherwise been. We give it to the reader, as a piece proper to preserve in these Memoirs.

The young men of Paris described in a satyrical vaudeville.

Beautés qui fuyez la licence,
Evitez tous nos jeunes gens ;
L'amour a deserté la France,
A l'aspect de ces grands enfans :
Ils ont par leur ton, leur langage,
Effarouché la volupté,
Et gardé pour tout appanage,
L'ignorance et la nullité.

Malgré leur tournure fragile,
A courir ils passent leur tems ;
Ils sont importuns a la ville

Ye beauties who fly from licentiousness,
Shun all our young men ;
Love has deserted France,
At the view of these men-children.
They have by their voice and language
Rendered voluptuousness savage,
And kept for their only character
Ignorance and nothingness.
Notwithstanding their idleness
They pass their time in running
every where ;

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A 12

NATIONAL LEVITY.

A la cour ils sont importans :	In the city importunate,
Chacun d'eux sans appel decide,	In court important.
Au spectacle ils ont l'air méchant ;	Every one pronounces like a judge ;
Par tout la sottise les guide,	At the theatre they look wicked ;
Partout le mépris les attend.	Every where folly guides them,
	Every where contempt attends them.

Pour eux, les soins sont des vetilles	For them respectful politeness is
Et l'esprit n'est qu'un lourd bon	trifling,
sens ;	And wit but affectation ;
Ils sont gauches auprès des filles,	Before modest girls they are awkward
Auprès des femmes indecens.	Before women they are indecent.
Leur jargon ne pouvant s'entendre,	Their jargon is so unintelligible
Si leur jeunesse peut tenter,	That if their youth should tempt,
Ceux que le besoin a fait prendre,	Those whom desire has allured
L'ennui bientôt les fait quitter.	Soon quit them with contempt.
Sur leurs airs et sur leur figure,	Upon their grace, and their per-
Presque tous fondent leur espoir ;	son,
Ils sont entrer dans leur parure	Almost all found their hopes ;
Tout le gout qu'ils pensent avoir.	They have displayed in their dress
Dans le cercle de quelque belles,	Whatever taste they may have.
Ils vont s'établir en vainqueurs,	In the circle of some fair ones,
Mais ils ont toujours auprès d'elles ;	They come to establish them-
Plus d'aisance que de faveurs.	selves as conquerors ;
	But they have always with them
	More freedom, than favours.

De toutes leurs bonnes fortunes,	Of all their good fortune
Ils ne se prevalent jamais ;	They never boast in public.
Leurs maitresses sont si communes,	Their mistresses are so common
Que la honte les rend discrets :	That shame renders them dis-
Ils preferent, dans leur ivresse,	creet.
La débauche aux plus doux plai-	They prefer in their ebriety,
sirs ;	Debauchery to the softest plea-
Ils gouteut sans délicatesse,	sures ;
Des jouissances sans desirs.	They taste without delicacy,
	Enjoyments without desires.

Puissent

Puissent la volupté, les graces,	Voluptuousness and the Graces
Les expulser loin de leur cour ;	Far expel them from their court !
Et favoriser en leur places,	And favour in lieu of them
La gaité, l'esprit et l'amour !	Gaiety, wit, and love !
Les déserteurs de la tendresse,	The deserters of tenderness
Doivent-ils goûter ces douceurs ?	Shall they taste these delights ?
Quand ils dégradent la jeunesse,	When they degrade youth,
En doivent-ils cueillir les fleurs ?	Shall they cull its bright flowers ?

If such were the young men of Paris, it appears, that the manners of the young ladies were not less reprehensible. The youth of both sexes, indeed, were relaxed by every species of dissoluteness and frivolity; voluptuous without desire, capricious without taste, they followed the volatility of fashion, with all the ardour of idlers, who occupy themselves on those objects which exert no energy of mind, and come not with the solemnity of instruction, but solicit regard by the gaiety of trifling.

The young ladies of Paris described.

Of the state of the French women, we receive an ample idea in the following prize subject, which we find in the *Esprit des Journaux*, for 1783, proposed by the Royal Aca-

demy of Sciences and Belles Lettres at Rouen, It is (observes the monthly critic) an interesting question.

Is not the little care which is bestowed on the instruction of women devoted by their present *education* to idleness, or frivolous occupations, the most immediate cause of the *change* that has taken place in the *manners* of the nation?

It is in the endless variations of fashion that the follies of the fair are to be observed. Yet endless as these may appear they seem sometimes to have exhausted their invention, and they had recourse to reviving the most obsolete fashions. In 1782, there was a rage among the ladies for wearing long and wide aprons; and ample neckcloths, significantly called by the French *des fichus*, because they concealed the fine neck of a lady. Madame la Marechale de Luxembourg could not patiently suffer them; she said, they had the air of a cook and a touriere; that is, female servants

servants who attend the nunneries. To ridicule with good humour the Dutchess of Lauzun, her grand-daughter, she sent her for a new-year's gift an apron of sailcloth, bordered with a superb lace, and half a dozen of neck-handkerchiefs of the thickest cloth equally ornamented. This curious envoy made some noise at Paris, and excited the poetical vein of the Chevalier de Boufflers; he gave on this occasion a charming song, which I transcribe for the pleasure of the reader. All the productions of this elegant poet are extremely beautiful, and full of those light graces which enchant men of taste. The song is divided into two parts. In the first, he speaks to the *cook*.

Anecdotes of a satyrical fashionable gift, and verses on the occasion.

J'applaudis a l'emploi nouveau
Qu'on donne a ma cousine;
Jamais aussi friand morceau
N'entra dans ma cuisine:
Elle auroit tort de repugner,
A l'etat qu'elle embrasse;
C'est ou le bon gout doit regner
Qu'elle est mieux a sa place.

I applaud the new employ
That is given to my cousin;
Never a more delicious morsel
Has ever entered into my kitchen.
She would do wrong not to be pleas'd
With the situation she has chosen;
It is where good taste is the arbiter,
That she is most advantageously
placed.

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On

On fait que des goûts délicats	It is known that of delicate tastes;
Le sien est le modèle ;	Her's is the perfect model ;
Ceux même qui ne le font pas	Those who are devoid of it
Le deviennent près d'elle :	Receive it, when near her.
Mais ma tante on vous avertit,	But, aunt, I must tell you,
Que votre cuisinière	That your little cook
Ne fait qu'éveiller l'appétit,	Only awakens the appetite,
Et point le satisfaire !	But does not satisfy it.

He addresses himself then to the touriere,
or nun who attends the turning door of the
convent.

Vous en qui mon œil prévenu	You in whom my anticipated eye,
Vit une cuisinière ;	Beheld a cook,
Passez moi d'avoir méconnu	Forgive me not to have known
La plus digne tourière :	The most worthy touriere ;
Pieux costume, doux maintien,	Pious manners, and soft appearance,
Prevenance discrète ;	Wisdom so discreet !
Oh ma touriere ! l'on voit bien	O my touriere, we see well
Qu'au tour vous êtes faite.	That you are well made for the turning.

Entre le cloître et les mondains,	Between the cloister and the world,
Ma divine touriere,	My divine touriere,
Sembler habiter sur les confins	Seems to live upon the confines
Du ciel et de la terre ;	Of heaven and of earth.
Tous deux à son aspect émus	Both alike moved at her face,
Doivent rendre les armes,	Must yield to her ;
Les immortels à ses vertus,	The immortals to her virtues,
Les mortels à ses charmes !	The mortals to her charms.

LET us observe the levity with which the
French nation treated their heroes, and such
personages

personages who attracted by their political importance, a temporary regard. When the Duke of Chartres returned to Versailles, after his wonderful sea-fight at Ushant with Admiral Keppel, the palace was crouded by courtiers of all descriptions who were anxiously waiting to salute their naval hero. In stepping from his carriage an abbé presented him with a long panegyric in verse; the Duke could not ascend the stair-case by the pressing croud of adulators who surrounded him. In the evening our royal admiral went to the opera, and the piece could not be heard, because of the loud acclamations of joy with which the public saluted their able and glorious admiral.

Observations and anecdotes on the levity and versatility with which the French treated their heroes.

Let us now pass to Paris. The Duke of Chartres had gradually sunk in the esteem of the Parisians. It was now curious to observe the sudden change of opinion in the town. A popular delirium spread through the honest citizens; and the streets and the theatres

theatres refounded with the name of the contemptible Orleans.

In the evening, when he appeared at the opera, every one present rose, and a clamorous applause lasted for above twenty minutes. When the public finished, the orchestra began to express their zeal, by loudly flourishing their triumphal trumpets.

There was at this time a company of idlers who used to assemble in the Palais-Royal, under a capacious tree which had been transplanted from Cracovia. These idlers called themselves *Cracovists*, and their society every evening acquired new members; indeed all the Parisians may be supposed to have been Cracovists. Under this tree they amused themselves with conversing on the new fashions, and occasionally, as much as they *dared*, with the political incidents of the day. Our hero became an ample subject for their dissertations, and they agreed in the excess of their gratitude to club their sixpences to give
some

some public mark of their admiration. Their sixpences poured in so fast, that at length they saw themselves enabled to have a band of musicians and very brilliant fire-works. The inhabitants of the adjacent streets illuminated their windows, and the people were admitted that evening into the gardens of the Palais Royal. Every thing passed with the utmost tranquillity; if we except the loud *veni, vidi, vici*, which with shouts of triumph were repeated for this wonderful naval hero.

Yet all was not terminated; the career of glory was still prolonged by the industrious adulation of Paris. One of the extraordinary follies exhibited on this occasion by the good people of Paris, during the short residence of the Duke there, was the following. They dressed a wicker image to represent the person of Admiral Keppel; they sang a song on his *defeat*, in presence of the Duke and Dutchess, they dragged him then in a dung-cart, and after having broke their scurvy jests on

on this poor wicker figure, he was thrown into the pond of the Palais Royal, with all the abusive epithets and imprecations, which a swinish multitude can so copiously display. What is surprising in this affair is, that their highnesses could authorise so indecent a spectacle to pass under their eyes, and sanctioned as it were by their approbation. But perhaps the Duke designed by all this to *persuade* the good people at Paris that he really had obtained a complete *victory* over the English fleet—or perhaps conceived that a *triumph* was honestly *due* to him, because he had *not* *been defeated* by Admiral Keppel.

But the triumph of the Duke of Chartres did not here terminate. Such was the *national levity*, that scarcely after ten days such clamorous plaúdits, the town turned rebellious, recanted from all their former proceedings, and he who had just received the tribute of public gratitude, became the butt of every wit and the object of every satyrist. His maritime

ritime exploits, his return to Paris, his ostentation at shewing himself immediately at the opera, and the stupid admiration of the ideots, were all now exposed. One of these vaudevilles is not amiss. It was most favourably received by the city, and found even admirers at the court. The satire was still rendered more poignant, by the author adopting the verses to the tune of a song much in vogue, and which had for title *Les Revenans*. The poet addresses himself to his Serene Highness in the following stanzas.

Satyrical
vaudeville
on the Duke
of Chartres.

Vous faites rentrer notre armée ;	You order our fleet to return home,
L'Angleterre tres alarmée	England trembling with the alarm,
Vous en louera :	Will praise you ;
Et vous joindrez a ce suffrage,	And you will unite to this suffrage,
Les lauriers et le digne hommage,	The laurels and loud homage
De l'opera !	Of the opera.

Quoi ! vous avez vu la fumée !	What, you have smelt the smoke !
Quel prodige ! la renommée	A prodigy ! Fame prepares
Le publiera !	To publish it ;
Revenez vite, il est bien juste	Return quick, it is but just
D'offrir votre personne auguste,	To shew your august person
A l'opera !	At the opera.

Tel

Tel cherchant la toison fameuse,	Thus seeking for the famous <i>Steele</i> ;
Jafon fur la mer orageuse	Jason on the stormy seas
Se hazarda :	Adventured ;
Il n'en eut qu'une, et pour vos peines,	He had but one ; for your labours
Je vous en promets deux douzaines,	I promise you two dozen
A l'opera !	At the opera.

Chers badauds courez a la fête ;	Dear fools, run to the festival,
Parmi vous criez a tue-tête,	Cry till your throats are hoarse,
Bravo ! bravo !	Bravo. bravo.
Cette grande action de guerre,	This noble action in war,
Est telle qu'il ne s'en voit guere,	Is such, that is rarely seen any where,
Qu'a l'opera !	But at the opera.

Grand prince, poursuis ta carriere,	Great prince ! pursue your career,
Franchis noblement la barriere,	Nobly leap over the barrier,
De l'opera !	Of the opera,
Par de si rares entreprises,	By such rare enterprises,
A jamais tu t'immortalises,	You will immortalize yourself
A l'opera !	At the opera.

The immortality of the Duke indeed did not last above a fortnight ; and his inanity had only rendered him ridiculously conspicuous. In the masquerades which the queen had after her lying-in, under the cover of a mask, the courtiers often expressed their genuine sentiments. Truth then appeared at court. Among the many poignant retorts which the Duke received in those few days of liberty,

liberty, one from a lady whom he insulted, is perhaps the most tolerable. M. De Genlis, in reviewing with the Duke several ladies at the ball pointed to one near them, who attracted by the graces of her figure. The Duke, in a *loud whisper*, said, It is a beauty that has passed. *C'est un beauté passée.* My Lord, retorted the irritated lady, It is like your fame. *Mon seigneur, c'est comme votre renommée.*

The national levity was amply displayed when Dr. Franklin first excited their attention. He for a long time was a fashionable topic, and the enthusiasm of the French (who perhaps were ardently desirous of obtaining that liberty, which was then for them but a visionary perfection they did not yet venture to gaze at) displayed itself in all the multiform shapes of extravagance. Franklin became their idol; because in paying their homages to him, they at the same time gave a vent to those

Anecdotes
relative to
the reception
which the
French gave
to Dr.
Franklin.

those concealed sentiments respecting government which would have been too dangerous for them openly to have expressed. Their frivolity seemed animated by a new energy, which the following anecdotes will perhaps sufficiently display.

French
anecdotes of
Dr. Frank-
lin.

In 1777, the reigning mode was to have an engraving of Dr. Franklin placed over the chimney; as formerly, says a cotemporary journalist, they used to have a *pantin*. A *pantin* was a kind of puppet which was made to move on springs and generally meant for the amusement of children. It is curious, continues the same journalist, to observe the portrait of this grave Englishman turned into derision, like that of the trifling plaything which entertained our idlers thirty years ago. A print-shop sold 6000 of these portraits in the first week of their appearance.

Dr. Franklin, an honest and sturdy Briton, must at his first residence in the frivolous
court

court of Versailles, have felt a continued indignation and a sincere contempt for the puny Sybarites who surrounded him. A stern republican, as he pretended to be, would not patiently have supported the shameful luxury and the abject servility which glared on his contemplation at every regard the philosopher cast about him. Perhaps it was the persuasion of the necessity of supporting them for the interest of his infant nation that induced him not to vent a groan, or give way to an expression which might appear to reproach this ruinous magnificence, this insulting oppression, while he saw the greater part of the nation languishing in extreme misery.

At first, however, Dr. Franklin was Dr. Franklin. No man is corrupted at the first attack; human nature is to be mined, not stormed. He seems gradually to have accustomed himself to the reigning vices and frivolities, till at length the stern republican appeared without a blush at brilliant balls,

U

divine

divine suppers, and all the elegant scenes of fashionable dissipation.

These reflections have arisen naturally from the following anecdote which we shall give in the exact words of the reporter. It is dated in February 1778.

Dr. Franklin *humanises* himself and begins to shew himself in company, even in the most fashionable circles. This shews more than any thing his good understanding with the government, and the satisfaction he derives from the good news lately received from his country. Lately he was at a ball given by Madame de Floissac, the lady of a financier. There was a charming assemblage of young and beautiful women, who every one successively went to pay him their homage, and embrace him, in spite of his spectacles.

The philosophers, however, are greatly offended with the ostentatious luxury which he suffers in his grand-children, and which forms a singular contrast with the simplicity
of

of the English philosopher. They have set up a new fashion of wearing red heels; a frivolous decoration, very well for a courtier of Versailles, but very unworthy of the descendants of one of the heads of the Congress of Philadelphia.

One of the most striking mottoes which were chosen for the portrait of Dr. Franklin, is the following one, which characterised this great man. It is, indeed, a fine verse, and of singular felicity.

Eripuit cœlo fulmen, Sceptrumque tyrannis.

He ravished the lightning from Heaven, and the sceptre from tyrants.

This in as concise a manner as possible, gives us the two great labours of Franklin; as a philosopher, his discoveries in electricity; and as a politician, his emancipation of the oppressed Americans.

We must place in this article, the reception of Voltaire on his return to Paris; the extra-

Curious
anecdotes
relative to
Voltaire's
reception on
his return to
Paris.

vagance displayed on this occasion, was certainly more the effect of the national levity, than of their genuine admiration for superior genius. Rousseau never received such loud public tributes of applause. But the facts will best explain themselves. Let us attend this vain, frivolous, ingenious, and even sublime Voltaire; his fatuity more powerful even than his sensibility; his pride greater than his genius; his impudence so excessive, that at length it ended in modesty. All this in Voltaire was extravagance; but the Parisians were still more extravagant.

Whether any satirical, or other signification was intended, it is, perhaps, difficult to affirm; but Voltaire, on his return to Paris, appeared in a chariot painted with a sky blue, and strewed with stars. He, perhaps, resolved, that the world should not be mistaken when he rode about the town; or, perhaps, he imagined that his coming to Paris was the same as going to Heaven.

He

He had prepared the public, for his appearance that night at the theatre. An expecting multitude, had filled the vast courtyard of the play-house. Scarce had this extraordinary man appeared in this extraordinary chariot, when everyone cried—"There he is."—The Savoyards, the apple-women, all the canaille of the quarter were there, and the acclamations of *Vive Voltaire*, resounded without end. The Marquis of Villette, who had arrived before, went to receive him in descending from the chariot, in which he was accompanied by the Procureur Clause. Both supported him with difficulty, and saved him with some trouble from the embraces of the eager croud. At his entrance in the play-house, a more elegant world, seized with the genuine enthusiasm of genius, crouded round him; above all others, the ladies threw themselves before him and stopt his way, that they might contemplate him the better. Some were even seen to touch, tremblingly alive all

over, his dress, and some even snatched some of the fur of his coat.

This saint, or god of the evening, was to seat himself between Madame Denis, and Madame de Villette ; and the pit with convulsive rapture, waited the moment when the poet was to appear. He came, and they immediately called *for the crown*. Brisard, an actor, approached to place it on his head—Voltaire cried out, *Ab Dieu ! vous voulez donc me faire mourir*, weeping with joy, and refusing the honour. He took the crown and presented it to his *belle et bonne*. She refused it, till the Prince de Beauveau seizing the laurel, replaced it on the head of the French Sophocles.

But the greater triumph was reserved for the close of the play, which was one of his own tragedies. His bust had been brought from the academy, and was now placed on a pedestal on the stage. The actors surrounded it in a demi circle, each holding a garland in the

the hand. A crown was placed on the bust ;
the noise of trumpets, drums, and fifes, announced the ceremony, and Madame Vestris holding a paper, repeated with an emphasis proportioned to the extravagance of the whole scene, the following verses.

Aux yeux de Paris enchanté
Reçois en ce jour un hommage,
Que confirmera d'age en age,
La severe Posterité.

Non, tu n'as pas besoin d'atteindre au noir rivage,
Pour jouir des honneurs de l'immortalité ;

VOLTAIRE recois la couronne
Que l'on vient de se presenter ;
Il est beau de la meriter,
Quand c'est la France qui la donne.

To the eyes of enchanted Paris
Receive now this tribute ;
Which will be confirmed from age to age
By severe Posterity.

No ! for you it is not necessary to reach the black stream,
To enjoy the honours of immortality.

Voltaire receive the crown
That has been just offered ;
It is glorious to merit such a distinction,
When it is France that gives it.

THESE verses were encored ; and an engraving has been made of this scene. Every actor placed his garland round the bust ; and because Mademoiselle Fanier, in a fanatic extasy chose to kiss it ; every other actor kissed the bust.

When the performance finally closed, a new confusion remained for the modest philosopher. Just seated in his chariot, the croud would not suffer him to depart. The horses were stopt, and our reporter says, they were kissed. Several young poets cried out, that the modern Apollo should be dragged home by the people ; but as the croud were not all poets, there were not a sufficient number of enthusiasts ready for this purpose. However, Voltaire heard as he passed along, an eternal echo of *Vivats*.

Such was the apotheosis of Voltaire, and such the national delirium. When he returned home, he again wept, and modestly protested that had he had the slightest idea of what had passed, he would not have gone to the play. Charmed with his reception at Paris,
he

he immediately bought a house; but his reception cost him too dear; for the agitation gave such a shock to his aged frame, that he died in the next month.

THE frivolity of these Sybarites is sufficiently evident; nothing could awaken them from their trifling refinements. In February 1779, at the very moment they and their Spanish ally had received the completest defeats, an universal joy took place in Paris. The object that could fix the attention at this critical period, was not a battle won, or a fleet destroyed; it was an opera dancer. The celebrated Made-moiselle Guimard, who having had the misfortune of straining her foot, *en repetant un pas de deux*, in the ballet of Medea and Jason, rendered Paris unhappy. This accident caused a general alarm, and the war with England was forgotten! Their wounded admiral, the Count d'Estaing, and their numerous soldiers, who perished before Savannah, was the con-
versation

Anecdotes
characteris-
ing the na-
tional frivo-
lity.

versation of a few days ; but the strain of Guimard's foot rendered them inconsolable. The nobility, the clergy, and the tiers etat, (says the writer of the *Lettres Historiques, Politiques et Critiques*) alike participated in this public calamity. Every one hastened to leave his ticket at her house ; and her Suifs twice a day distributed a *bulletin* of her situation, as was customary with the royal family. The day she danced on the stage, appeared a day of public festivity. In what country, ancient or modern, were actors, but what is worse, opera dancers, thus protected, and adored, as a virtuous nation, would have adored illustrious characters ?

Another anecdote of their frivolity.

But as the war occasionally occupied their volatile minds, their levity was also desirous of seeing the nature of a battle—at least at the opera. The celebrated Noverre, in one of his ballets, introduced a number of the French guards to perform their manœuvres. The effect was striking ; and when the post brought
a new

a new account of a defeat, the frivolous Parisians consoled themselves with a view of their soldiers mixed among their dancers ! All the nobility assisted at this spectacle ; and the Marechal de Biron, complimented Noverre in his having converted the opera into a school of Tactics. The serjeant who had the honour of heading these soldiers, on the theatrical boards, was recompensed by a cross of the order of Saint Louis !

If some, who appear to have possessed a gravity not congenial to the sentiments of their fellow citizen, censured these theatrical exhibitions, and said, that these soldiers, might, in war, be employed to a more useful purpose ; there were not wanting some who flattered the public taste by agreeable verses. The following ones attracted notice, though they have little but their vanity to distinguish them. The last line is satyrical and not amiss.

Quand Mars nous laisse aupres des belles,
Nous ne voyons, nous n'aimons qu'elles,

Et

Et nous bornons tous nos exploits,
 A suivre de l'amour les loix.
 Mais aussitôt que Mars ordonne
 Que nous allions sous ses drapeaux,
 Nous quittons Venus pour Bellone,
 Au clergé cedant nos travaux.

The credu-
 lity of the
 Parisians.
 Anecdote
 which serves
 as a counter-
 part to the
 bottle-con-
 juror.

THE Bottle-conjuror, was long a cause of exultation to our Gallic neighbours, which they eternally repeated as a proof of our national credulity, and the facility with which we might be imposed on. The following anecdote will, however, serve as a counterpart, and we may, if it is worth the while, take our *revanche*, on our once gay rivals.

In December 1783, when the air-balloons were the object of public attention, there appeared in the Journal de Paris, the fashionable periodical publication of that period, a letter from a watchmaker, who, without subscribing his name, offered to traverse the river Seine, between the Pont Neuf, and the Pont Royal, so quickly, that a fast trotting horse, which was to set off at the same time, should

not reach the opposite extremity, before him. To make this experiment, he asked for his reward, two hundred louis, when he reached the appointed spot ; and which were merely to pay his travelling expences to, and lost time at, Paris. He appointed the first of January, if the river was not frozen, for the experiment. The town was immediately agitated ; subscriptions filled rapidly ; and at the court and the city, their only talk was concerning the watchmaker, who, like another Saint Peter, was able to walk on the water, faster than a horse could trot by land. As some, however, appeared to doubt its practicability, he satisfied the enquirers, by describing his apparatus. These consisted of a pair of elastic *Sabots*, joined by a thick bar. Every *sabot* was to be one foot long, and seven inches high, on an equal breadth ; and if necessary, he was to hold in each hand a bladder strongly blown. He assured the public, that he could repeat the miracle fifty times in an hour.

About

About the 20th of the month, the public were alarmed by several reports, that the watchmaker of Lyons, who was to walk over the river Seine, without wetting his feet, was an ideal personage. The learned journalists, were humiliated by the confession of a facetious gentleman M. Combles, who, in the gaiety of his imagination, had attempted to try the credulity of the Parisians. But our humourist greatly endangered his liberty by the joke; for he had not only imposed on several distinguished persons, but a society at Versailles had subscribed a thousand livres, and which society was formed by *Monsieur*, who is too grave a prince to suffer with impunity any personal ridicule. Indeed, the city of Paris had begun to build *scaffolds*, for the convenience of the subscribers.

The facetious invention of M. Combles, was in great danger of being punished like a state crime; and dreading the resentment of *Monsieur* and the *city of Paris*, he hastened to
the

the lieutenant of the police, and supplicated his assistance to extricate him from this singular embarrassment. He assured him, that he was led to play this joke, with no evil design, but merely, as having observed since the invention of the *Ærostatic* machines, that the Parisians talked of effecting every wonder they conceived, it was to give a timely check to the national credulity, that he had imagined this harmless piece of pleasantry. He desired that the lieutenant would inform the public, that he was authorised in giving notice, that the watchmaker, in attempting an experiment on the river Rhone, had sunk, and been drowned. The lieutenant, in answer, told him, that he could not authorise so impudent a fiction, but would do his utmost in soliciting his Majesty's pardon. When M. Breteuil presented the king with the lieutenant's letter, his Majesty laughed, and amused himself at the cost of Monsieur, and the Court. It was thought proper to conclude this affair, by informing the

public, that the watchmaker was insane, and that he was neither desirous nor capable of performing his engagement. Many of the subscribers could not, however conceive, that to walk over the river, as fast as a horse can trot, was less impracticable than to ride in the air.

The genius of the nation begins to wear another appearance about the time of the American war.

The National Levity was insensibly declining about the American war. In 1782, a writer describes the ladies as being all *Anglomanes*; and, indeed, about this time, after the splendid victory of Rodney, the fashionable female Parisians, wore bonnets *à la Rodney*. For the vanquished, voluntarily to exhibit the honours, and thus to rejoice in the advantages of the enemy, is a curious fact in the history of human nature, and an instance of the most singular levity. Indeed, about this time, the French were gradually metamorphosing themselves into English manners; and an idea of the excellence of the British government, was rapidly propagating among
the

the people. These English maxims, were, for a while, tolerated; as the court considered them as only a temporary levity in the nation, which would pass like its former ones. But liberty was insensibly acquiring a form and a voice; and the bonnets *à la Rodney*, shew, that though the infant first appeared in sport, its strength and growth gathered till it rose with a gigantic force.

This is apparent by the following anecdote. The influenza spread about this time; and that also was converted into a fashionable dress; the hats and bonnets of the frivolous Parisians, were all *influenzas*. The Count de Vergennes, in a conversation, was describing the singularity of this epidemic disorder, and said, it was called *le mal Russe*, because it first appeared at Peterburgh.—We are threatened, observed a Duchess present—*With another malady, which will come from America*.—What is that madam? interrogated Vergennes,—The INDEPENDAN-

Curious anecdote relative to the American War.

X

that

that our troops in that country, are delighted in finding that every soldier may hope to become a general, if he shews any talents for war ; that the Americans acknowledge no distinction of nobility and rank, and that all men are equal. This infinitely pleases the French ; in their return home, they will dwell with rapture on these events ; they will tell their relations and friends all they have seen, and in what manner men become independent ; they will teach here what they have learnt there.—The Count de Vergennes was greatly embarrassed at this effusion. This minister had formerly persuaded himself, that the separation of the Colonies from the Mother Country, and the war of France, would ever after have a fatal influence on the future existence of England. But our country shewed resources of which our enemies appeared ignorant.

A new fashion alluding to America, forbidden by Government.

The government, on this occasion, lowered itself even to interfere and tyrannise over the fashions and glory of the fair sex. In 1777, a *coeffure* was announced of an allegorical nature,

nature, called *aux insurgens* ; to the insurgents. This dress, however, never appeared, as it was immediately forbidden by government ! But, to prove the inconsistency of this volatile administration, six months afterwards a political engraving was advertised for by subscription, in which their triumph was celebrated, and called “ America Independent.”

The French nation gradually appropriated something of the energy of the British character. They first imitated our fashions, and at length adopted our manners, and even our government. This change was visible so far back as the year 1783. The petit maitres, and coxcomb abbés, were metamorphosed into reasonable beings. There were no more, any of those frivolous conversations, where the fashions, theatres, intrigues of court, and separations of love, formed the only topics. These pretty nothings, were followed by sensible conversations ; they only talked of the revolution of America, liberty, equality, the

The French
begin to
dress, think
and act like
Britons.

abuse of ministerial power ; restraining despotism ; and the forming a constitution drawn from those of the Americans, and our nation. Satirical songs appeared no more ; the errors of a minister, or a general, were not now put into vaudevilles ; but they *reasoned* on every thing ; they conversed and meditated on the *Constitution*. The French were formerly too little instructed ; they were now, perhaps, too *suddenly instructed*. The *women* particularly, were foremost, in exulting on the revolution of America. They were solicitous, they used to say, to propagate the new principle of government. In a word, to close our reflections by an anecdote, a fashionable beauty addressed herself to a gentleman, in these words : “ The empire which our sex has ever enjoyed over your’s, shall serve for the future to teach you to shake off the chains of despotism, that you may wear no other than our own.”

OF
T H E A T R E S,
A C T O R S, &c.

I N this article we purpose collecting those anecdotes which will amply display the frivolous character of the nation. The insolence and depravity of the players; and the connexion there existed between the *ministers* of state and the *actors* of the theatre.

THE riband of the order of St. Michael, which was bestowed on persons distinguished

by their superior talents, or by eminent services performed for the nation, was, in 1762, presented to M. Rebel, one of the *directors of the opera*, by the intreaty of a courtier, as a mark of royal approbation, and as an incentive for his colleagues, and those who were to succeed him in his important employ. He had also a pension of nine thousand livres, to support the honours of the ribband!

The influence of the actors.

IN 1762, the French theatre had to boast of a variety of favourite actors; but the versatility of their talents did not hinder them from bearing one characteristic trait of insolence and libertinism.

Mademoiselle Clairot was the heroine. She became the queen of the theatre, and at length the queen of Paris. When the public followed her with adulation, she retired with contempt; and when her companions reproached her with the rarity of her appearance,

pearance, she answered with the dignity of a sovereign—"If I play seldom, you and the public are equally obliged to me; one of my nights makes you live for a month."

WHEN Grandval, a celebrated actor, was invited to a *tete-à-tete* by a fair lady of quality, their interview was in an apartment ornamented with the portraits of her illustrious family. At the moment he was sinking into her arms, *ah, Grandval!* said the yielding, and yet half modest fair, *que diroient ces heroes, s'ils me voyoient entre vos bras? Ils diroient*, replied the insulting theatrical hero, *ils diroient que vous etes une putain.*

SOMETIMES the actors found it their interest to give a representation gratis. In June 1763 the French playhouse, one night, was opened on these terms. Mademoiselle Clairon and Mademoiselle Dubois, between the play and farce, came forward on the

The names
of two
Actresses
joined with
the King's.

stage, and threw money into the pit, in crying *Vive le Roi*.—The poor populace enchanted with a few fixpences, very loudly shouted *Vive le Roi et Mademoiselle Clairon, Vive le Roi et Mademoiselle Dubois!* This action of the two theatrical queens was considered as most insolent. But when we enter more deeply into their manner of life, and the irresistible power these women had over the first characters in the nation, it will not excite surprise.

About this time, when Mademoiselle Clairon had her portrait engraved, a mania for a long while was spread throughout France to purchase it. In less than three months she had received above five hundred louis.

Anecdote of
the power of
actors.

THE following anecdote will display the importance and power of the actors. Freron had in one of his journals, delineated a portrait of Mademoiselle Clairon, which was too resembling not to be recognised. She immediately

immediately went to the gentlemen of the king's bedchamber, and threatened that if she was not revenged on this Satirist, she would retire from the stage. An order was solicited and obtained from the king (Louis XV.) for the conveyance of the journalist to Fort l'Eveque. Having the gout fortunately at that moment, his friends obtained a suspension of the order, till he was capable of moving. The literary world loudly exclaimed against this dreadful exertion of power, in favour of an *actress*, who had been not long since a fugitive stroller. This affair for a considerable time agitated the court and the capital. Every one took a part in this quarrel. Freron had powerful friends, but the minister would yield to no intercession in his favour but from Mademoiselle Clairon herself. The queen at length obtained his pardon. *This* was not, however, approved by the *actress*. She addressed another letter to Versailles, in which she lamented that she

now saw that her talents were no more agreeable to the king, since it was allowed to abuse her with impunity; and, therefore, she persisted in her retreat. She afterwards personally addressed herself to the duke of Choiseul, who condescended to amuse her with this reply, and which sufficiently expresses the interest felt in this *national concern*. Madame, (answered the duke) you and I are alike on a theatre; but with this difference, that you chuse the characters agreeable to yourself, and are sure of meeting with the public applause. There are only some persons of a bad taste like that miserable Freron, who refuses to give you their votes. I, on the contrary, have my task, which is generally very disagreeable; do what I can, I am criticised, condemned, hissed, and ridiculed; but I do not for all this, resign. Let us sacrifice our private resentment to the good of our country, and let us serve it, in our best way. Since the queen, madam, has
accorded

accorded her pardon, you can now imitate her majesty's clemency. The theatrical queen smiled with a noble contempt at this elegant jeering, and retired with displeasure on her elevated brows. She immediately called a committee consisting of her friends, and the whole company of the theatre. At this council table, the Duke of Duras presided. He wrote on this occasion to M. de St. Florentin, that it was to be feared the whole troop would desert, if the modern Melpomene was not revenged of the influence of Freron. This letter terribly alarmed M. de St. Florentin, and this minister wrote to a princess that the affair daily became of the utmost importance, that for a long time so serious a matter had not been agitated at the court, which was equally divided, and that, in spite of his profound respect for the orders of the queen, he believes that he must on this occasion prefer those of his majesty. How this important altercation was

was concluded we have not discovered; but this is very immaterial.

Curious
theatrical
intrigue
which puts
all Paris in
confusion.

IN April 1765, there existed a considerable fermentation in the dramatic corps. One Dubois, a very middling actor, was cured of a certain malady by a surgeon, who complained to the company of the non payment, and the actor denied the debt. Mademoiselle Clairon, fired with any reflection on the *honour* of the company, raised her cohort, and addressed herself to the Duke of Richelieu. This lord treated the affair as a matter between persons of very little consequence, and told the players that as they were the *peers* of Dubois they might judge him. In consequence of this they expelled him, with one Blanville, who appeared to have perjured himself in some other affair. All this shews how nicely these important personages considered the point of honour. But the affair did not thus terminate; it was only
a black

a black sky, and the storm was yet to come. Mademoiselle Dubois, the daughter of the exiled player, took the affair at heart, and fought by the attraction of her charms, to gain a patron in the Duke de Froufac, and to reinstate her father in his full honours.

She was not unsuccessful in her attempts, and his majesty commanded that Dubois should appear on the stage. This gave rise to a scene at the theatre, with which, since its institution, the actors had never yet ventured to insult the public. When the king's order was known, a plot was immediately formed by Mademoiselle Clairon, and the first actors, not to play that night. The hour of drawing up the curtain approached, and all the actors were suddenly indisposed. The remaining members of the troop, in a state of inconceivable embarrassment, apply to the Marechal Biron, who happened to be there. It was agreed to change the play. But the real state of matters was already well

magnificently furnished, and a prodigious affluence of carriages were every day rolling to the court of this theatrical queen. She gave numerous and heavenly suppers, and she still insulted the nation by a display of opulence and luxury. The king, she said to the Exempt de Police, who came to conduct her to prison, may seize my fortune, my person, and my life, but her honour was a sacred deposit, which kings could not touch.—True, Madame, replied the Exempt, where there is nothing, the king loses his rights.

The actors
imprisoned,
enjoy a
splendid tri-
umph.

The affair was at length terminated by granting a pension to Dubois, who played that year, and who, it was agreed, should then retire. Mademoiselle Clairon had a tedious disposition during that period, and at length tranquillity was restored to Paris, without occasioning a civil war as dreadful as that of the Guelphs and Gibbelines.

THE

Anecdotes
of the scan-
dalous man-
ners of the
Great and
the Opera
Dancers.

THE depraved manners of the men of fashion, and the infamous luxury of the opera dancers, awaken, continually, indignation in a reflecting mind. Mademoiselle Grandi, a figuranti, complained at the opera, one evening, that she had lost a lover, who had given her a thousand louis in five weeks. A spectator said, that she could easily supply this loss. The figuranti answered that it was difficult; and that she was resolved to have no lover under the price of a carriage, and two English horses, with at least two hundred louis annually, to maintain them. Here the conversation closed. The next day, Mademoiselle Grandi received a magnificent chariot, with two beautiful English horses. This present was also accompanied by three riding horses, and 130,000 livres in cash, in the chariot! It was a Fermier General who thus inscribed his name, with singular glory in the annals of Cythera.

Not inferior was the treatment Mademoiselle

felle Heinel, the German opera dancer received from the Count de Lauragais. Her charms had seduced his affections from Mademoiselle Arnoux. He made her a new year's gift of 30,000 livres; 20,000 to a brother she greatly loved; a house elegantly furnished, a carriage, &c. The Count de Lauragais had spent 100,000 livres on Mademoiselle Arnoux; Mademoiselle Heinel, modestly fixed her price at 20,000 livres; and the generous count tripled the sum! At this moment a scarcity of corn prevailed at Paris, and bread was rising at every hour!

MADemoiselle GUIMARD, the first opera dancer, claims attention, not only by the opulent luxury she displayed, but by a philanthropic action which veils, for a moment, the dissolute voluptuousness in which she was sunk. This actress, celebrated for her talents, having a rendezvous in an insulated part of the town, with a magistrate, who

Y

concealed

Curious
anecdotes of
the celebra-
ted Made-
moiselle
Guimard.

concealed himself with the greatest mystery, had then an opportunity to contemplate the misery, the famine, and the despair of its unhappy inhabitants; she possessed a heart that voluptuousness had not cankered into insensibility. Two thousand crowns were the fruits of her iniquity; but this word is, perhaps, too severe, for she immediately distributed them to the poor people she passed; and delivered the surplus to the minister of the parish, to distribute, as he judged proper. When she arrived at Paris, she begun a subscription for the relief of this obscure suburb.

Three suppers of different nature, given weekly by Mademoiselle Guimard.

Mademoiselle Guimard, indeed was supported by the Prince of Soubise, in the most extravagant and incredible luxury. Her palace, her equipages, her servants were sumptuous beyond description. She certainly united the most cultivated taste with this shameful libertinism. She used to have three suppers weekly, in which she indulged her

her various taste for ostentation; the fine arts; and debauchery. The first was composed of the nobility, and personages of title; at the second, were assembled authors, artists and learned men who paid their devotions to this elegant nurse; and the third formed a true orgies; the most seductive, the most infamous women pursued debauchery through all its terrible refinements. This celebrated courtesan in her splendid chariot attracted the public notice; by the significant arms she had adopted. These consisted of a scutcheon, from the middle of which issued a branch of myrtle. The graces were its supporters, and the loves crowned the whole. She distributed privileges for hunting, which could only be obtained by great favour at court. When she danced in a little ballet, which the Countess Du Barry gave, the king made her a *pension* of 1500 livres. This trifle was only accepted for the hand that bestowed it. It was a drop of water

in an ocean; and she at length gave it to her chamber maid! Marie Antoinette condescended to make Mademoiselle Guimard, her arbitress of taste; she would hold long and intricate consultations on the height of her feathers, the colour of her ribbands, and whatever related to her balls, theatres, and galas!

In 1786, this lady's affairs were greatly embarrassed, and she resolved to sell one of her favourite *Boudoirs*, called her little temple, to satisfy her creditors. The readiest means she imagined was by a lottery.

A private lottery, though otherwise illegal, permitted for an opera dancer.

A private lottery was as illegal in France, as here, the government reserving this privilege to themselves. Nothing, however, could be refused to the modern Terpsichore; and proposals were issued. The tickets were each of the value of one hundred and twenty livres, and the number were two hundred and fifty. The capital amounted, therefore, to 300,000 livres, and the property was valued by one of the first architects, at

408,000,

408,000, besides the furniture, which as fixtures and only adapted for this brilliant palace, was to remain with the house. There was only to be one prize. It is hardly necessary to add, that the tickets were easily disposed of. Marmontel used to call this lady, *la belle damnée*. When Made-moiselle Guimard was in England, and had a suit with the opera managers, Mr. Erskine, to equal severity, did not join the polished refinement of Marmontel. A true Englishman, when he calls a person a *damné*, can never add *la belle*; besides that our modern Ciceros are not apt to say *fleurettes* to other ladies than their *clients*.

Mr. Erskine
not so po-
lished a sa-
tirist as
M. Mar-
montel.

For the young female Parisians, what noble lessons were thus continually presented to their eyes. They saw the obscurity of a retired modesty, and the rewards of an impudent voluptuousness. A young mind could not long hesitate which to chuse.

Anecdote of
a theatrical
quarrel, in
which all
Paris takes
a concern.

IN February 1771, an ingenious writer thus expresses himself. "Paris abounds with idlers, who only find their pleasures in objects which excite contempt and pity in men of sense. A quarrel between strollers has divided our petulant youth. An excellent female opera dancer, and the best male dancer, who have long been rivals, and long lived in acts of jealousy, are now disunited by various motives. Their enmity has declared itself on the occasion of a certain *step*, which Mademoiselle Heinel resolved to dance, and which Vestris reserved to himself as maitre des ballets. This contest has sharpened the partisans of either, who resolved to revenge themselves. Last Tuesday it first appeared against Vestris, who while performing the chacoen which closes the opera, was violently hissed. Enraged against his rival, who was waiting behind the scenes, and whose eyes sparkled with triumph, he suffered himself to abuse her with every outrageous

outrageous term, which greatly disgusted the audience. Every one speaks differently; but the majority are for Mademoiselle Heinel. The affair was brought before the *minister*, who did justice to the injured lady. The public at her next appearance, received her with loud plaudits. It is resolved, says our journalist, that to-morrow, Vestris shall be very differently received. But his admirers pretend to equal those of Mademoiselle Heinel; and all the Parisian youth are collecting their forces to meet to-morrow, and determine the important contest.

The plot formed to humiliate the self-love of Vestris, and not his *talent*, (continues our journalist) attracted an astonishing concourse to the opera. But the public became reconciled. In the morning he had made the most submissive apologies to Mademoiselle Heinel. The indulgent public that was met to humiliate him, now received him from all parts of the house, with

the most distinguished favour. He, on his side, to express his sensibility, surpassed himself in the chacoon, and all would have happily terminated, had not poor Vestris danced with such enthusiasm, that he strained his foot, and rendered Paris disconsolate, by a fortnight's confinement to his chamber!

Such then were the public interests at Paris! If they were not allowed to hiss at ministers, they were contented to do this at opera dancers, and if they had no national politics, they found something equivalent in theatrical ones.

History of
an indecent
puppet shew
and its great
success.

IN 1771 a puppet-shew appears to have been the great concern of the Parisians. Audinot, an indifferent actor, quitted the stage with the hope of attracting the public by the aid of puppets. These wooden players, by the aid of a human dwarf, proved to be better actors than himself. Animated
by

by success, he formed an elegant little theatre, in which he introduced a troop of children. These he taught the art of acting, and their natural graces, and infantine efforts excited the public attention. Two playwrights, who had been as unfortunate in their dramatic pieces, as Audinot in his performances, considered themselves at least capable of writing for children. But the charm of innocence was not long a charm for the dissolute Parisians; and the managers, therefore, introduced a variety of meretricious embellishments, and obscene dialogue, which soon rendered it the resort of a vast croud; the girls, the rakes, the idle, and the effeminate triflers of either sex. The ladies of the court did not fail to applaud, and to patronise; and Audinot rivalled with superior lustre, Nicolet and his ape, who had lately excited a similar ferment throughout Paris. This theatre, by the amateurs, was considered as a seminary for the drama;

Children
trained up
in a school
of obscenity

drama ; but the more reflecting part of the town lamented the invention, as corruptive of youth, of decency, and morals ; and which by the licentiousness introduced, and applauded in that theatre, already formed a school for libertinism.

We have only to add, that when Louis XV. was devoured by ennui, Mademoiselle Dubarry used to call for Audinot, and his infantine actors, who by the aid of very obscene dialogue, and voluptuous dances, gratified the court more than it did his majesty. At length Audinot had a pension!

Inscriptions
of a very
different na-
ture, for the
new Opera
house.

The prevailing licentiousness of the opera did not pass without applause from the dissolute, and censure from the more reasonable party. We give instances of both. When a new opera house was erected, the poets were invited to form an inscription for this brilliant theatre. Among many indifferent ones, we select the following, as not devoid of merit.

Les

Les arts dans ce Palais prodiguent leurs merveilles,
Pour enchanter les coeurs, les yeux, et les oreilles.

In this bright palace all the arts appear,
Charming with prodigies, the heart, the eye, the ear,

ANOTHER.

Dans ce Palais brillant de beaux arts et des fées,
Heros, dieux et demons, tous les êtres divers,
Dociles aux accords des modernes Orphées,
Sont le tableau mouvant de ce vaste univers.

Rais'd by the arts, and fairies, this bright feat
Gives all the troops of fancy's heavenly birth,
They docile to each modern Orpheus meet;
The moving painting of the various earth.

A poet who appears not to have been insensible that this brilliant palace would become a theatre of debauchery and immorality, wrote an inscription, which, though it was more just than the preceding ones, was not certainly adopted.

Ici, les dieux du tems jadis,
Renouvellent leurs lithurgies,

Venus

Venus y forme des Lais,
Mércure y dresse des Socies.

Here all the gods of days of old,
Renew their moral lithurgies;
And Venus forms the Lais bold,
And Mercury bids the Sofia rise.

Anecdotes
of Made-
moiselle
Raucoux.

MADemoiselle RAUCOUX, in 1777, was engaged to play a few nights before the court at Fontainebleau, for which she received a present of ten thousand livres. This actress was notorious for the most dissolute manners, and for indulging an unnatural passion, which seems to have been very prevalent in France at this period. The actors, and particularly the actresses, were desirous of expelling her from their company, lest the contagion of her licentiousness should pollute the female part of the theatre. Her majesty was her great friend and protectress. But the pen falls from my hand at a number of anecdotes which now lie before me; I respect an
English

English public, and pass them over in silence. Into what a depravity of morals must the Parisians have sunk, when one evening, in a box facing her majesty, this infamous woman was seen caressing a girl in the most shameful manner!

The splendid and indecent protection, which this actress received from the queen, began now to form the popular topic of conversation. She had been obliged to fly from her creditors; and the queen at length offered to pay her enormous debts, amounting to 200,000 livres! It is even probable, that the following royal edict was made chiefly for this depraved woman. In September 1779, a declaration was issued from the court, which rendered free from all seizures, the persons of and payments made to all receivers, inspectors, actors, and other persons, belonging to the *theatres*, excepting one third, which might be seized on by the creditors, who, however, were to allow
from

from this portion, enough for their maintenance! The monarch, an honest man, here signed one of the most dishonest acts; and made a formal decree, that an actress of the most depraved morals, might return to Paris! Such was the dangerous imbecility of the government! But could Louis XVI. have sanctioned such a dreadful corruption?—Mademoiselle Raucoux was the favourite of the queen of France.

LET us turn our contemplation from such monstrous passions. Let us even forget a formidable number of anecdotes, which prove with a terrible truth, the unnatural depravity of the court, and the theatre. Since the days of Ovid, it was supposed that all metamorphosis had ceased; but it appears that a horrid transition of sex was at this moment, but too common. When Mademoiselle Raucoux became, for a short time, the mistress of Count d'Artois;
while

while the Marquis de Villette, was induced, by the power of Voltaire, to marry Made-moiselle de Varicourt; these *conversions* into a man and a woman, by a man and a woman, were considered as two edifying lessons very necessary to the libertines of either sex at Paris!

THE insolence of these actors sometimes amused. Volange was an excellent buffo at the opera. He had first appeared in public as a merry-andrew, at a fair; he had then become a vagrant pantaloon, and was now a favourite buffo, called by way of eminence, *Jeannot*. This splendid increase of reputation, he did not bear with the calmness of a philosopher. It made him proud, nice at taking offence, and very grave. All which qualifications, are certainly not congenial to a farcical performer. This important personage was invited by the Marquis de Brancas, with a view of entertaining his company.

Anecdotes
of the insolence of
actors, &c.

When

When he was announced, the marquis lead him to the assembly and said, "Ladies, here is Jeannot, who I have the honour of introducing."—"My Lord," interrupted the austere pantaloon,—"*I was Jeannot*, when I played at the Boulevards, but at present, I *am Monsieur Volange*."—"So be it," replied the marquis,—"*but as we don't chuse to have any but Jeannot*, let *Monsieur Volange*, be led out of doors."—This Buffo was, however, a man of great importance in the theatrical world. The managers of a theatre declared, that they were indebted in the sum of 200,000 livres; and that when Volange appeared on their stage, they not only cleared their debts, but formed a balance in their favour of 300,000 livres! The Comedie Italienne, had long been deserted, and to attract the public, they addressed themselves to Volange. But as these actors treated him very cavalierly, and extolled with an air of dignity, the superiority of
their

their stage to *those* he had been used to, he quitted them, replying with equal dignity, he left them to their miserable *state*; and he preferred, like Cæsar to be the first in a village, than the second at Rome.

When he was confined to his chamber by a cold, his door was surrounded by the carriages of the nobility; and a bevy of fashionable beauties crowded to the levee of this extraordinary buffoon. One of the pieces in which he performed, was played *twice a day* during *one year*! His bust was engraved in the fine porcelaine of Seve, and was the fashionable new year's gift. The queen also distributed them among her male and female favourites.

Singular
honours paid
to a Buffoon.

THE lyrical empire (1778) was thrown into great consternation by the following terrible occurrence. Mademoiselle Cecile, a dancer, who formed the hopes, the ornament, and the delight of the opera, having

Z

refused

The minister and an
opera dancer

refused to dance, because she was refused the dress of Mademoiselle Guimard, one of the *ministers of state*, being at that moment present, ordered that she should be sent immediately to Fort l'Eveque, and declared incapable of appearing on the stage. Fortunately for the lady and the public, she had become a favourite of the prince de Conti; she, therefore, under such august protection was liberated after a few days confinement. It was with difficulty, however, she could regain permission to appear on the stage—but it was particularly *stipulated* by the *minister*, that it was on condition, that *she should not dance in the dress of Mademoiselle Guimard*—admirable ministers! Admirable opera dancers!

Another
order from
the minister.

WHEN Mademoiselle Guimard retired from the stage, she erected *two theatres* of her own. This was surely equalling the ostentatious magnificence of those Grecian

courtezans who sometimes built a pyramid; and sometimes founded public games. To these theatres her *friends* only were invited, and she attracted to her stage the dramatic Coryphæuses of the public theatres. Here the *government* was again obliged to interfere; for these actors, in travelling to the delicious villas of Mademoiselle Guimard, were obliged to repose themselves on their return to Paris, and absolutely forsook their public functions. But this was at length rectified by an *order* from the *minister*.

THESE theatrical courtezans, so much the attention of the public as well as of the individual, received homages of various descriptions. One which became a prevailing fashion, was eagerly adopted by the dissolute heroes of gallantry. It consisted of sending magnificent presents to the selected favourite anonymously; whenever she received such a fairy gift, it was said that she had received a

Curious account of the nature of sylphid presents.

favour from a *fylph*, and to *gues*s at the *fylph* formed the amusement, for sometime, of Paris; and the mystery, no doubt, that of the *fylph* himself; who, however, gradually disclosed himself, and appeared in the form of some notorious man of the town. We abound in anecdotes of *fylphs*. Mademoiselle du Thé was long the favourite of an unknown *fylph*, who appears to have received very exact information, for this fair idiot could hardly form the most extravagant wish but she saw it realised on the following day. Above 100,000 livres in jewels in this manner were conveyed to her by an invisible hand! Such were the ruinous amours of *fylphs*!

The minister again in the theatre.

LA RIVE is a living actor whose talents are now considered to be splendid. He does not appear, however, to have shone with pre-eminence of art, during the time of Le Kain. When this last sublime actor died,

and, the theatre was divided into a civil war, among those who aspired to succeed to his characters. The theatric division run so high, that to satisfy the contending parties, the minister was solicited to appoint an umpire. The duke of Duras had this honour, and the French marshal, with military power, decreed that Le Kain's parts should be divided among three actors; Molé, Menvel, and La Rive.

THE actors indulged the most singular haughtiness, and it was their delight to mortify the public by shewing a contempt for them. It is true, in this case, an actor cannot safely indulge his theatrical insolence; the *majority* against him is too visible. But, notwithstanding this, we observe continually that the superior actors refused frequently to perform; and often only appeared as if it were a national favour. Le Kain one winter did not perform above six times, till the *court* thought proper to

remind him of his neglect. When the queen went to the play, the proposed piece was obliged to be set aside owing to the indisposition of the *Sieur Clairval*. Her majesty displeased, said, it is with great trouble we can get a sight of that gentleman. This mortifying observation so much enraged the stroller, that he threatened to retire from the stage. It was with great difficulty, and by the interference of the duke de Richelieu, that this gentleman got over his pouting humour, and condescended to tread the boards once more to the consolation of the despairing pit.

BOOKS,

B O O K S.

LITERARY persecution, is the effect of despotism, which trembles to have the veil drawn from its crimes. Under Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, a Roman fugitive, who had ventured to write against those tyrants, could not find an asylum in any place; he was pursued every where, and punished with death, unless he preferred receiving it from his own hand. Under Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. says the author of the *Lettres Historiques*, a similar persecution existed. Cardinal Richelieu never forgave any one, who had dared to oppose, or to censure him. Louis the

Great, exerted a vengeance unworthy of a king, against the writer of a newspaper, whom he carried off in Holland. Under the reign of Louis XV. how many persons have been carried away in foreign countries, for having written against the despotism of ministers, or the pernicious influence of mistresses. There is a proverb, that nothing but truth offends.

The literary
Censors de-
scribed.

The Censors of books, in France, were a kind of literary inquisitors, which have long been unknown in England; for, there was a time when the liberty of the press in Britain likewise languished under a similar tribunal.

The original institution of these censors, was merely designed as a guard on those publications, which might be injurious to society. Their laws were simple, and their approbation, at first, was drawn up in this concise manner. They declared, that they found nothing in the work contrary to religion, government, and morals. They had not even a right to judge of its intrinsic merit.

It

It was not long, indeed, before this system was corrupted. To gratify a faction, or a friend, these censors assumed the liberty of loading their approbations with high eulogiums, and impertinent criticisms. All this was a superfluous appendage, and did not accord with the impartial austerity of their institution. These insipidities might have been easily excused, had not the intriguing spirit of politics, insinuated itself into this department. The interests of literature were sacrificed to the court; and the voice of censure and indignation was silenced before it could address the public. No honest Parisian could employ a press in his native city; and the first-rate works in French literature, were constrained to seek foreign presses, and to be surreptitiously sold in France. *L'Esprit des loix*, was first printed at Geneva; the *Henriade* at Cologne; Raynal's *Philosophical History of the Indies*, and Helvetius celebrated work on *L'Esprit*, were all prohibited works.

The

The Censors
in general
illiterate and
bigotted per-
sons.

The censors who were appointed as the arbiters of manuscripts, it might be supposed, were distinguished characters in the literary republic. But the contrary was the fact. It was not the ability of the censor which the government had so much in view, as his devotion to their orders. It has been wittily observed, that the ministers made censors, as the Ecclesiastics, holy water; any kind, however unclean, would serve when it was once *titled*. These places were a titular gratification, with which some great man gratified his pedantic tutor, secretary, and it has been said, his valet de chambre. It was thus, that genius was compelled to kneel before dullness and ignorance. How often have we seen with indignation, the works of eminent men, allowed to be printed by persons whose names were unknown in Literature. It was a painful mortification for superior writers to receive their manuscripts interlined, erased, and queried by men unworthy of ever reading them.

Yet,

Yet, to such corrections, the unhappy writers have submitted. Buffon, Mirabeau, Diderot, Marmontel, and Helvetius, alike persecuted, were at length obliged to accept the *corrections* of such men. Some authors feeling too parental an affection patiently to see their offspring lacerated, by barbarous hands, ventured to print their works in their original state. But an imprisonment at Vincennes, shewed, that the animadversions of these censors, were not destitute of *force*.

Personal motives, almost always directed the views of these censors, even on subjects merely of a literary nature. A censor, connected with the academy, or who was desirous of this honour, was careful to erase whatever might offend the academy, or a member. Another, attached to the theatre, who was fearful to lose the privilege of his free admission, or who, perhaps, was feed by the corps for this purpose, would not suffer the justest and most necessary strictures on the players.

The Censors
influenced
generally by
personal
motives.

In

In a word, it was always secret hatred or affection, which decided on the manuscript of an author, and which guided the pen, either to erase or approve.

Literary
persecution
produces all
the abuses of
the press

The liberty of the press, was, therefore, totally extinct in France; and this was certainly an impolitical regulation. It only served the more to irritate the acrimony of an author, and to dip his pen in the most deadly venom. The prohibition of a work at Paris, could not hinder its appearance; and whatever was printed at a foreign press and anonymously, brought its own recommendation to the public. Under this veil, an author gave himself up to all the licentiousness of his pen, and facts and observations which he would not have ventured to publish with his own name, appeared in all the glare of exaggeration. The writer then knew he had nothing to fear, and that he could only attract favour by bitterness, and boldness. Violence, sometimes, swollen into fury; truth distorted into fiction; and that
eloquence

eloquence of style, which the lively feelings of a man of genius pours forth with such ease to himself, and torture to his adversaries ; characterised the multitude of publications, which often terrified the government and enlightened France.

The *chef de la librairie*, crushed the booksellers with an iron mace. He had the privilege, and too often orders from court, to enter at all hours into their warehouses, and make whatever seizures he thought proper. It was a common practice at Paris, to talk of works which never existed. Some did this to give themselves importance, and others out of pure malice. As soon as the alarm was spread, the poor booksellers were threatened, visited and ransacked. Of many instances, we give one. In 1776, it was said, that a work entitled the Royal Almanack existed, in which the Queen, Count d'Artois, and others, were calumniated without mercy. An instant persecution took place, of the colporteurs and

2

bookfellers

bookfellers. The court, agitated through all its departments, had even the provinces ravaged. No such work was ever found. But thousands of honest tradesmen were vexed, insulted, and menaced.

Anecdotes
of Abbé
Mably.

In 1765, Abbé Mably published his first two volumes, of his observations on the history of France. The subject is there treated from the commencement of the monarchy, to the reign of Charles le Bel. In this work he defended, with a laudable zeal, the rights of humanity, against those ambitious monarchs, who regard their fellow-creatures as born to be their slaves. This freedom of disquisition, was very displeasing to the government, and the work was immediately prohibited. We have just been informed, that afterwards, to hinder the continuation of this work, the government compromised matters with our author, and he received a pension; in consequence of which the succeeding volumes did not appear. It was in 1788, that the Abbé
published

published the four following ones, and he was urged to this, by the party who then were meditating the revolution. Whenever a *philosopher* receives a *pension*, for the suppression of his *work*, it would appear, that it had been written not with the philosophical patriotism of enlightening his fellow citizens, but with the interested motives of a literary trader. In 1784, Mably made another attempt, to add to the reputation, which he had acquired by his treatise on the manner of writing history. In his principles of morals he raised a host of enemies among the ecclesiastics, and the devout. In that work, he would not only tolerate, but encourage places of public prostitution. He also represented the fanaticism of the clergy, and their contradictory principles with those of politics and morals. All the Sorbonne were in arms. Mably, terrified at the pending storm of theology, submitted himself to a public recantation. Those were the two spirited passages in his work ; which, in general,
is

is heavy and tedious. As soon as the Abbé signed this recantation, this work which had hitherto been in a languishing state, found a rapid sale. A convincing proof, among many others, that nothing obtains its end less, than a government attacking the freedom of the press.

The Sorbonne persecute Marmontel for his excellent romance of *Belifarius*.

In 1767, appeared the *Belifarius* of Marmontel. This moral and political romance, excited a tumult in the Sorbonne. In the fifteenth chapter of this work, the author wrote on the subject of Toleration, and wrote like a philosopher. On the denunciation of the Sorbonne, the book was immediately stopt; and its privilege annulled. The archbishop threatened to thunder with a mandate, against the author's maxims; and the theological faculty was to proscribe them by a public censure. Marmontel attempted to calm Beaumont, the archbishop of Paris, by signing any recantation he thought proper to dictate; and M. Bret, the censor of the work, submitted to lose

lose his place, and what was worse, his pension.

The Sorbonne, at length, produced their formidable attack. In its first stage, it was Some Sorbonnic maxims. stopt by government. These wise pedagogues, after having established as a principle of Christianity, *religious intolerance*, dared to assert, that *civil intolerance* should naturally follow from the first axiom, by the close union existing between the two powers; and by the necessity of the sword of justice, sustaining the thunders of the church. The mandate of the archbishop, dictated by the same infernal genius, had to encounter the same difficulties. These dangerous maxims even shocked the Court of France. At length, much altered, and more mollified, the theological faculty, published in December 1767, its *Determinatio, Sacrae Facultatis Parisiensis in Libellum, cui titulus Belisaire*. This curious censure lies before us. It is a quarto volume, consisting of 123 pages; the Latin translated into French.

A a

They

They first, proposed to censure thirty-seven assertions, but they have confined themselves to fifteen propositions, all extracted from the fifteenth chapter of this romance. On the first of February 1768, the ignorant bigot, (such is his appropriate epithet*) the archbishop of Paris, published after his sermon, the mandate, which condemned a book having for title *Belisaire*, par M. de Marmontel, de l'Academie Francoise, &c. Our Archbishop

* The sensible author of the "Vie Privée de Louis XV." has thus drawn the character of Beaumont, the archbishop of Paris. M. de Beaumont was very ignorant, very headstrong, and very susceptible of any kind of prejudice against any person, or any party; a friend of flatterers and informers; otherwise, he was a man of the purest and most austere manners; intrepid in matters of faith, and inclined to become, if it was necessary, its confessor and martyr."

In the "Memoires Secretes," is preserved an epitaph on the Archbishop of Paris, which perfectly characterises him. It is dated December 27, 1781.

Dieu lui donna la bienfaisance;

Le diable en fit un entêté;

Il couvrit par sa charité,

Les maux de son intolerance

made

made the analysis of his mandate at its conclusion. He there informs us, that *reason* must submit to *revelation*; that the glory of a sovereign consists in the protection of the Catholic faith; that it is their *right* and their *duty* to employ the *sword*; and that the catholic religion, is the firmest pillar of the throne. Belisarius is condemned, as containing propositions false, rash, scandalous, impious, erroneous, and replete with heresy!

While Marmontel was execrated by the clergy, Marmontel triumphs, his work was honoured with the most splendid patronage. In a letter which he wrote to a friend on this subject, in September 1767, he says, “ the Empress has had my Belisarius translated into the Russian language, and dedicated to a bishop. The Empress, the Kings of Sweden, Denmark, and Poland, make it their breviary. Crowned heads are for me, why should I care for the pedagogues of the Sorbonne?” About the same time, Voltaire

Voltaire's
remarkable
observation
on the hu-
man mind
in Europe.

wrote a letter to the Russian Ambassador, which is more remarkable. "The Empress condescends herself to translate Belisarius, which some men of a college, at Paris, calumniate," and afterwards has this very singular paragraph. "I see with pleasure, that *there is forming in Europe, an immense republic* of cultivated minds. The light is communicating from all parts, I receive things from the North, that astonish me. Since *these last fifteen years*, there has arisen a *revolution in all minds*, which forms a great epoch. The cries of these pedants, announce this great change, as the croaking of the crows announce fine weather."

An account
of Mira-
beau's inte-
resting work
on *Lettres*
de *Cachet*
and *State*
Prisons.

In 1783, appeared M. de Mirabeau's work on *Lettres de Cachet and State Prisons*. Confined for above eight months, in a dungeon at Vincennes, through the kindness of M. le Noir, having obtained the free use of pens, ink, and books, and part of his manuscripts; he wrote this work in 1778. It dis-

plays

plays an uncommon labour of research, in books of all kinds, and in all languages; but, what was more adapted to render it popular, was the warm eloquence which pervades every part. Our author, first enquires into the right of issuing these fatal letters. He proves, that the royal prerogative by which a citizen may be detained as a prisoner, in virtue of a sealed letter, without any legal form, is a violation of the public law, and even expressly reprobated by it. Were it even, he adds, founded on a legal title, it would not be less illegitimate and odious; he enters into a pathetic detail of the effects of the tyranny of such letters, and eloquently declaims against those who attempted *to prove their political utility*. His notices of the state prison of Vincennes, are given in the strongest manner. His animated descriptions of the treatment of the prisoners; the goaler of this prison, called the commandant; the food he gave to his boarders; their wretched lodgings;

the books they were allowed to read, with many other similar scenes, formed the bitterest strictures possible on the government, and the despotism of ministers. And he closes his elaborate work by the following argument and summary: "*Les rois de France ne sont en droit et selon tous les monumens du droit public, que les mandataires d'un peuple libre.* The kings of France, only enjoy the right, also according to all the regulations of public law, of being merely the proxies of a free people.

Strong thinking, and fine writing united, render this work precious. The whole offers a multitude of striking facts on the abuse of authority, and lettres de cachet; he describes scenes with the colours of a painter, and the eye of many of his readers, must have been moistened in the perusal.

This philosophical production, was read with the greatest avidity. It is certain, that this interesting topic at the time, had a great effect at court, as well as with the people.

The

The following year was distinguished by an *evacuation of the prisoners* at Vincennes. The Count resolved to perpetuate the happy event by an engraving; the design was shewn to the king, who, much to his credit, highly approved of it. The design resembled the frontispiece to Linguet's account of his confinement in the Bastille; and probably the Count meant to insinuate, that the same despotism existed in that state prison, as well as at Vincennes; Louis XVI. however, it is universally agreed, never signed many *lettres de cachet*, and the empty dungeons of the Bastille, are an eternal testimony of his justice. An anecdote, on good authority, is given relative to *lettres de cachet*, which does great honour to this monarch. The Count de Sanois, tormented by the continued irritation of domestic discord, flew from his family, and concealing himself under a borrowed name, retired to Lausanne, and resolved to live on the productions of his pen. By some sinister mode,

Happy consequence of Mirabeau's work on *Lettres de Cachet*.

Anecdote of a *Lettre de Cachet*.

his wife and daughter-in-law obtain a *lettre de cachet*. In open violation of the rights of nations, a minion of the police breaks into his chamber at night, arrests him, spreads infamous reports concerning his prisoner, and drags him, feeble with age and malady, to a dungeon in France. His *memoires* are at length published; his case is so interesting and pathetically drawn, that all but his unnatural persecutors shed tears on them. They reach the court, and are read by their majesties,

Louis XVI.
observation
on Lettres
de Cachet.

The king said, after having perused them, "I see they make me give *à droite et à gauche*, in this manner *Lettres des Cachet*, without my even knowing the name of the person; I will put an end to this horrid practice."

The parliament of Paris, who in 1781, appears entirely devoted to the court, and careless of the cause of the people, resolved to prove its existence by a striking instance of its sovereign authority over those objects which were submitted to its cognizance. In

June

June of that year, it ordered an *auto da fé* to be made on the new edition in ten volumes of the *Histoire philosophique et politique des Etablissemens Européens dans les deux Indes, par l'Abbé Raynal*. According to their barbarous law diction, it was said, *The court having heard the report, &c. has condemned this work to be torn and burned as impious, blasphemous, seditious, and tending to make the people rise against the sovereign authority, and to overturn the fundamental principles of civil order.* It was also ordered, that the person of Raynal should be seized; it was kind of them, that he was not condemned to share the fate of his book: the Abbé escaped to Berlin, where he was most favourably received.

This celebrated work of the Abbé Raynal has too much intrinsic merit to have wanted such a factitious incitement as a decree of the parliament of Paris, to have become popular. But to such a cause many works of mediocrity have been indebted for their ephemeral reputation.

reputation. To burn a book was the most favourable advertisement; and it is somewhat astonishing that our areopagists were not yet convinced, after the experience of a century, of the inutility of such decrees, which assisted the sale, rather than hurt the condemned work. Many in consequence of such edicts became readers; and middling productions obtained notice, which would not have been known had it not been for the denunciations of the *avocats generaux*, and the honour of being burned by the hangman. Rousseau very justly observed, when one of his eloquent treatises experienced the same fate, *bruler n'est pas repondre*; burning is not answering.

Curious literary anecdote respecting Raynal's History.

A curious anecdote is given concerning this work, and which rather tends to prove that the parliament did not so much exert themselves as that they were excited to this condemnation by superior orders. It seems that an enemy of Raynal had one of the volumes bound, and so ingeniously contrived as to open
directly

directly at the passages which might prove most offensive to the king. The volume was placed on his table. His majesty did not fail to observe them, and immediately sent for the keeper of the seals, whom he severely reproached for suffering such works to enter into France. His majesty also added, that he was surprised that men so religious as himself and M. de Vergennes should countenance such publications by their subscriptions. The keeper of the seals hastened directly to the secretary for foreign affairs. He wrote to the republic of Geneva (then entirely devoted to the French court) soliciting the prohibition of the work. The parliament of Paris received an injunction to fulminate with their magisterial power; and to conclude the formidable farce, the Sorbonne employed itself in condemning it theologically. Raynal, however, is yet living, and the eloquence of his compositions will exist with the language. But the parliament, the Sorbonne, and Louis XVI. are no more.

LOUIS XV.

Character
of Louis
XV.

LOUIS XV. like so many other monarchs, would have been an amiable citizen, and was an execrable king. Perhaps this even is too favourable an idea; for, though in spite of a vitiated education, he, in his early years, and so late as his malady at Metz, gave frequent indications of happy dispositions, he afterwards wallowed in the mire of debauchery, and suddenly seemed (particularly after his infamous attachment to the vile Du Barré) to lose the faculties of his head, and the feelings of his heart. When he lay, in a dying state at Metz, in 1744, an universal alarm was felt throughout the nation. Hitherto he had not shewn an habitual dissolution of manners, and had sometimes given
proofs

proofs of an amiable sensibility. The courier who brought to Paris the news of his recovery was surrounded, and almost stifled by the caresses of the people. He was carried along in triumph, and every where resounded, "the king is cured." *Te Deums* were sung in crowded churches, and Louis obtained by the spontaneous voice of the nation the uncommon epithet of the *well-beloved*.

Louis XV.
saluted by
the title of
the well-be-
loved

But in the year 1757, the most opposite change is observed in the nation. In this year his assassination was attempted by the fanatic Damien. The first rumour was that he had been assassinated. The Parisians were not slow in their enquiries. But what a difference in this epocha, (says the author of the private life of Louis XV.) to that of his malady at Metz. In a word, they were enquiries of curiosity, not of sympathy; they were more alarmed than afflicted; the heart took no share in the event; no tears were shed; and the churches were empty.

It

The nation
change their
sentiments
of this mo-
narch.

It was not the French people who had changed, it was the monarch himself. Once he had been seen at the battle of Fontenoy, and had more than once shewn a solicitude for the happiness of the nation. Now, he was a voluptuous and feeble prince, placed in a narrow circle of adulative and corrupt courtiers. Shut up in his *petits appartemens* and infamous *parc aux cerfs*, accessible only to the most dissolute of the nation. Now the most

Some of his
later occu-
pations.

innocent moments of Louis XV. were those in which with an apron and a spoon he condescended to cook ragouts and boil coffee under the direction of the Countess Du Barré! Such are the sublime souls which too often have cast an indelible disgrace on a throne!

In the private life, the following anecdote reveals the dispositions of the monarch and the nation in 1754. When his majesty went to Compeigne, it was customary to visit Paris in his way. He was made to believe that
this

this city was rebellious, because a mob had lately insulted a lieutenant of Police, and that therefore he should punish the inhabitants by not honouring them with his presence. It is certain, though not easily to be credited, that a *new road* was hastily constructed from Versailles to St. Denis, for the purpose of his majesty's not appearing at Paris; and what is not less extraordinary, it was called *le chemin de la revolte*—the road of rebellion; as if it were to perpetuate the remembrance of an imaginary crime, and the shameful weakness of the monarch!

Singular anecdote of the Road to Rebellion.

The versatile genius of the French, forms, however, in this, as in many other subjects, a curious contrast. When that enormous collection of the *memoires secretes* is examined, it will be found that while one part of the nation were adulating the monarch, the other were prepared to lampoon him. In 1763, we find (June 6,) that a *dreadful paper* had been fastened to the new statue of Louis XV.

Two very different inscriptions made to him.

LOUIS XV.

XV. It bore this concise and energetic inscription,

STATUA STATUÆ,
A STATUE TO A STATUE!

Several persons were taken up on suspicion, and the spies were busy. But two years afterwards (1765) we find a pleasing description of a fine monument erected in honour of the king, which bore a very different kind of inscription.

TO LOUIS XV.
THE BEST OF KINGS,
WHO BY THE MILDNESS OF HIS REIGN
RENDERS HIS PEOPLE HAPPY.

And this *happy people were starving!* If every monarch would acquire the true knowledge of the sentiments of his people, let him freely permit every one to place an inscription on his statue. Such an impartial statue might be a most useful minister of state!

The following anecdote is very striking;
and

and for the sake of the reflections which accompany it, we translate it as it stands, in Bachaumont's *Memoires Secrets*, vol. vi, p. 15. we premise that the parliaments were remonstrating at every hour with Louis XV. who was employing the most despotic methods to intimidate them.

October 22, 1771.

The public conversation has lately turned on the whole length painting of Charles I. king of England, by Vandyke, which was bought several months since, by the Countess Dubarry, for the sum of 30,000 livres. This lady had placed it in her apartment; near his majesty's, and it appears not without design. We are informed that whenever his majesty is returning to his natural benevolence, and his exhausted rage melts into clemency, she points out to him the example of that unfortunate monarch; she gives him to understand that perhaps *his parliaments* would have attempted on his person the *same things*, if the chancellor (Maupoau) had not disclosed to him their

Remarkable anecdote of a portrait of Charles I. presented to Louis XV.

criminal and mad plots, and had not stopt them before they had reached to that degree of blackness and atrocity to which they would have attained.—However absurd, however wicked may be the imputation, she inflames the prince for the moment, and it is from under this *picture* that proceed those destructive thunders which are ready to strike the representatives of the law and to pulverise those who are at the extremities of the kingdom.

The Countess is not capable of inventing a calumny so malicious, so well combined, and so terrible; the alarms with which she inspires the king must be from other politicians as skilful as they are infernal.

This anecdote (which the events confirmed) is attested by courtiers, whose testimonies are of the greatest weight.

This anecdote affords a great scope for reflection. Had the parliaments at *that moment* been permitted to proceed, it is more than probable that the *revolution* would *then* have
taken

taken place; and that Louis XV. and not Louis XVI. had perished on a scaffold. The Countess little expected, while she was gazing on the picture of Charles, that she was contemplating not the fate of her royal lover, but her own.

The revolution was nearly taking place in the reign of Louis XV.

We have seen in the article Ministers, that Louis XV. oppressed his people by *stockjobbing*; we now find in his private life that he was also a *corn-chandler*. It was the monarch who was the great monopoliser of wheat in his kingdom, and who made a scarcity or abundance as best suited his speculations. The author of the private life, vol. iv. p. 153, says, Louis XV. was so seriously occupied by these speculations, that those who were admitted into his private cabinet, saw in his desk the *daily price currents* of flour and corn, in the different markets throughout the kingdom!

Louis XV. a cornchandler as well as stock-jobber.

And to what purposes were these criminal accumulations devoted? to the forming his

petits apartemens, in which art was exhausted, and the grossest debauchery triumphed; a luxury, that was brilliant with the ruins of a nation. But the most dreadful institution of this modern Sardanapalus was his *parc-au-cerfs*, a royal seraglio of the most abominable nature. It is one great source of the ruin of the morals and finances of the kingdom. Its immense expences exceed calculation. We refer the curious reader for a minute description of these horrors to the *Vie privée*, vol. iii, p. 17. From this institution the treasury was overwhelmed by bills, called *acquits du comptant*; sums delivered by the mere signature of the king, without any mention made for their object. The treasurer needed no other justification in his own accounts than these orders; and Louis XV. intoxicated with love at his *petits soupers* was willing to sign whatever was proposed!

The same author gives an anecdote of wanton prodigality which is too curious to pass

pass by. Louis XV. had a cluster of fireworks, which was composed of thirty thousand fuses, and which, at a crown a-piece formed a sum of four thousand Louis; and (he adds) we know that a cluster of fireworks occupies exactly the space of the twinkling of an eye!

On the day which Louis XV. died the Abbé Terrai had the audacious imprudence to publish a decree of the king's council which announced a new tax. Under the signature of Louis, a caustic wit wrote the following verse, from Greffet's farewell to the Jesuits.

Anecdote of a new tax on the death of Louis XV.

C'est ainsi qu'en partant je vous fais mes adieux!
'Tis thus in parting that I bid farewell!

It was under the government of Louis XIV. that the absolute despotism of the French monarchy was established, and which since that time had ever been increasing. It

Reflections on the rise of French despotism.

was his minister Louvois, and his Madame de Maintenon who rendered him so odious to Europe and his subjects. Had he been conducted by such men as Colbert, he would have died with glory. D'Argenson was the institutor of that inquisitorial *police* which aimed in the most fatal manner at the liberty of all citizens without distinction. The ministers of Louis XV. found this method so convenient that they rigorously adopted it. Since the beginning of the regency to the death of this monarch, France offers the most revolting instances of the abuses of arbitrary power. A simple magistrate, a lieutenant of police made all Frenchmen tremble, from the lowest of the subjects even to the princes of the blood. A Berrier, a Sartine, a Le Noir, and their chief, the Count de St. Florentine, afterwards the Duke de la Vrilliere, committed every horror with impunity. Those who shall read in history all what these odious persons have done, will not easily conceive how a great nation like the French,

French, could suffer themselves to have been thus persecuted and crushed during two reigns which lasted one hundred and thirty-six years. Under the reign of Louis XVI. affairs bore a more favourable aspect. The king had the best intentions possible; and the demolishing of the Bastille has afforded an incontrovertible truth, that he had rarely permitted himself to consign unhappy men to its dungeons. His death has at least produced a different effect than that of his predecessors; it was not unattended with tears. But Louis XIV. called the Great, and Louis XV. the well-beloved, who had both been extolled into divinities during their lives, had no sooner departed; but the voice of popular execration was heard over their tombs,

THE

Q U E E N.

Curious
anecdote of
the queen's
passion for a
head-dress
of feathers.

THE Queen sent to the empress her mother, her portrait drawn in the fashion she had adopted; of which the most striking part was a head dress remarkably overcharged with high and wide feathers. Her august mother returned the portrait, observing, that no doubt, some mistake must have happened, in sending this present; in which she could not find the portrait of a queen

queen of France, but that of an opera dancer; that she returned it, and was desirous of the true one. Her majesty, no doubt, considered this affectionate sarcasm, as too severe and frivolous, and as the effect of age and imbecility. She did not, therefore, judge it necessary to reform herself in what related to an object of taste, and, the court saw the next day, (says the scandalous chronicle of the times) an additional elevation and number of feathers on her royal head. The queen's passion for feathers at length became so observable, that a young bard, having written some satirical verses on this fashion, for the *Mercure*, the author thought proper to return his poem, and ventured not to insert it lest he might incur the queen's indignation! In a word, the ladies (as was just) paid their court to her majesty by cherishing the fashion she had introduced; and the trade of feathers, which had long been on the decline in France, suddenly revived,

vived, in so much that the city of Lyons was exhausted of these articles in a moment.

The queen
revives a
sinécure
place in fa-
vour of the
princess de
Lamballe.

In 1775, her majesty's gradual ascendancy over the king's mind becomes apparent, from a variety of anecdotes. It was the honest intention of Louis XVI. to correct by a severe œconomy, the national dilapidations which his two last predecessors had occasioned. Louis XIV. by a ruinous passion for war, for grandeur, and ambition in all its shapes; and Louis XV. by as ruinous a prodigality for voluptuous pleasures. For some time the queen had in vain repeatedly solicited his majesty to re-establish the late unfortunate princess of Lamballe, her favourite companion, in the place of superintendent of the queen's palace. The king, frightened at the enormous charges attending this place, persisted in his refusal, for a considerable time; and the *contrôleur general* above all others, the great advocate for economy, enforced with his majesty the necessity of rescinding

rescinding such heavy finecures. At length, her majesty by an unwearied assault, surpassed the patriotic views of the king. She prevailed, and her friend the princess of Lambelle, gave her oaths, and took this place, 18th of September, 1775. On this occasion the *Marechale* de Mouchy, maid of honour to the queen retired, finding herself in a degraded situation, which was by no means disagreeable to the queen. This lady was grave and rigorous, and of very opposite dispositions to her majesty. This severity of manners, had frequently offended the queen, when she was dauphiness. She used to call her *Madame l'Etiquette*.

In 1777, we collect the following anecdote- Of her balls.
 dotes relative to the queen. Her balls were frequent, but her majesty was so fastidious respecting the dancers, that they were often thinly attended. The king having reproached her for not sending an invitation to a lord whom he esteemed, her majesty answered

swered, that he danced too ill. Nobody dances worse than myself, replied the king, and I, therefore, shall not appear at your balls.

This year was distinguished by a prodigal folly; her majesty and the count d'Artois having thought proper several times to make nocturnal excursions from Versailles to Paris, and from Paris to Versailles, a new illumination was formed, at the expence of 18000 livres, for the convenience of our royal travellers!

Curious
anecdotes
relative to
her balls.

The balls were accompanied with every extravagance of dress, and every species of enormous gaming. Her majesty joined the dances with an ardour and taste which would have been appropriate in an opera dancer. She invented a particular dress, for this brilliant art; this art which exposes with such grace, the animated limbs, and breathes a contagion of voluptuousness. These habits were in the Spanish fashion, and of the most

splendid kind. None of them cost less than six thousand livres; and the dancers consisted of the lords and ladies of the court, who, induced by her majesty's example, imitated the opera Coryphæuses. The most delicious airs were selected, and the orchestra of the opera formed the symphony. Her majesty was so enchanted with these cotillons that she frequently called for their repetition. The duke of Chartres gave two balls at the Palais Royal, at which her majesty was present. The money lost at these two balls amounted to one million, eight hundred thousand livres! It soon became necessary to close these balls; the excessive fatigue which they occasioned to her majesty, had endangered her health. What magnificence, what frivolity, what ruin, does all this offer to our contemplation!

The following anecdote which has been just communicated to us from one of the parties

parties concerned, is a splendid illustration of her majesty's passion for dancing.

When the colonels were preparing to join their regiments, the queen, who regretted the departure of this number of elegant young men who had become necessary to the pleasures of the court, which she had most at heart, [that is to say, *they were fine dancers* ;] presented to her husband a list of all those she wished to keep near her, and for whom she, therefore, solicited leave of absence from their regiments. The king, instead of reading the note, tore it before her majesty's face, declaring, that he should be very sorry to know the names of those of his officers, who prefer so frivolous an amusement, to their duties and their glory.

Anecdotes
of her
frivolous
taste for the
stage.

We have shewn her majesty as an *opera dancer*, we must also display her talents as a *player*. It was she who introduced a taste for acting at court. Beneath her auspices, it is said, the Count d'Artois became a skilful
rope-

rope-dancer; and an illustrious troop of the young nobility, enlisted themselves under the banners of Thalia. The public, indeed, were not admitted to these theatrical exhibitions. The audience consisted of those persons who were attached to the royal family. The king was greatly dissatisfied at these frivolous and loose employments, which her majesty had chosen; one evening he hissed the queen, her majesty received it with good humour, laughed,——and played the next evening.

The *furor* of acting increased on every representation with her majesty. She was desirous, that *Madame* should take a character; but *Monsieur* strongly opposed his princess from becoming a player, and a coolness, in consequence, took place. The queen did not act well; no one but the king dared to hint this; but the loud applause from every part of the sycophantic theatre, perpetuated

perpetuated the pleasing illusion, and her passion for the stage.

She now attempted to communicate more refinement to her theatrical abilities. She devoted every morning to study, and for this purpose, she took her lessons from one Michu of the Comedie Italienne. It was, no doubt, an edifying scene, to observe the queen of France receiving the orders of a stroller, in what manner she should act in a comic opera!

Dissatisfied that she could not appear in public, she attempted a new mode of augmenting her audience. She invited the authors of the pieces acted at this royal theatre; and one evening she had the *Gardes du Corps* then in waiting, called in to be present at the exhibition. When the comedy was finished, the royal actresses came forwards, and addressed them in these words, "Gentlemen, I have done every thing I can to amuse you; I wish I could have played better,

better; that I might have given you more pleasure," "*Messieurs, j'ai fait ce que j'ai pu, pour vous amuser ; j'aurois voulu mieux jouer, afin de vous donner plus de plaisir.*" It would appear by all this that the queen was emulous of the character of the infamous Theodore, whose character has been so admirably described by Gibbon, in his Roman history, vol. iv. p. 51. 4to.

The ladies of the court were delighted with this taste of their mistress, because it lead to great splendor of dress, and to certain salaries and presents with which they were gratified.

A little domestic anecdote, occasioned by this passion of our royal actresses, introduces us to the acquaintance of her majesty, Madame, and the Count d'Artois.

Anecdote of the Queen, Madame and count d'Artois.

The queen had in vain, repeatedly desired Madame to take a character; this had always been rejected as unworthy of her dignity. A coolness had, in consequence,

C c

taken

taken place; and the queen one day said to Madame, but since I, the queen of France act, you should not be above it.—Madame replied, if I am not a queen, I am of the blood of which queens are made.—Her majesty not, perhaps, liking the comparison, with the imperial fierceness of Austria, took fire, and disrespectfully compared the petty house of Savoy to that of Austria, “ which does not even yield,” (she added) “ to that of Bourbon.”—To such extremities went our pouting rival queens. But the Count d’Artois, being present, with a happy sarcasm, avenged the insulted honour of the Bourbons, by saying, “ Hitherto, I feared to interrupt your majesty’s contest, as I considered you to be *angry*; but now I perceive that you are only *joking* !” —Such were the domestic discords of the Bourbons! Two sisters in the family of a private *citizen*, sometimes quarrel concerning their last *new caps*; but two *queens*, animated

mated by the same passion, differ about the *antiquity* of their *bouses*.

During her majesty's lying in (1778) she She encourages excessive gaming. unfortunately introduced a most violent rage for gaming. She had a pharaoh table regularly established, and appointed M. de C——, the son of a celebrated gamester, to be her banker. The ladies flew to these occupations with all the characteristic ardour of the sex, emulous of rivalling even her majesty; and at this crouded table, a seat was not always to be obtained. The business of our banker increased so much, that he was obliged to represent to the queen, that he could not proceed in his employment without a coadjutor. Her majesty permitted him to chuse one. His choice fell on M. Poincot, a chevalier of St. Louis, who not having yet born the commission of a colonel, according to the etiquette could not be seated in her presence. He therefore remained standing, when her majesty perceiving it, careless

of the ceremonial customs of Versailles, ordered a chair to be brought to him. The rigid and old courtiers groaned at this violation of formality and precedence.

Interesting
anecdotes of
gaming

Play rose so high, that they were obliged to invent a new mode of managing their accounts. It was impossible for a person to bring four or five thousand louis in gold; boxes were contrived which were filled with pieces of mother of pearl, engraved with their name, and on the other side the sums for which they were meant to pass. The following day these bills of exchange were immediately paid. M. de la Vaupalliere, having desired his lady to arrange some pieces for this purpose, she ingeniously had her portrait with those of her two children, engraved on them, with these words, *Remember us*. When this gentleman opened his box at the table, it occasioned a momentary surprise; he applauded the invention; laughed, played, and was ruined.

In

In 1786, a young man of the first fortune in France, lost at the queen's table, the enormous sum of twelve hundred thousand livres. Returned home, and even ignorant of the amount he had lost, he wrote letters to his friends; intreated them to save his honour; to remember his wife and child; for that he, plunged into an abyss of misery, and unworthy to appear before honest men, would never be heard of more, for that he had gone to hide his shame and his despair in some obscure corner, or fly, while he could find earth to walk on. This affecting incident was not easily forgotten, and excited murmurs among the thinking part of the Parisians, at the horrid gaming encouraged at her majesty's table,

Gaming cannot long exist without frequent violations of honesty. This obvious reflection is sufficiently exemplified by attending to the private anecdotes of the queen's pharaoh table, at this moment. It offers a

Anecdotes
of the sharp-
ing and
cheating at
these royal
gaming
tables.

The duchesses notorious cheats.

dreadful lesson for the lovers of gaming. We observe many of the most amiable women, and many of the distinguished nobility, reduced to the baseness of the lowest adventurers. Rouleaux of counterfeit louis substituted for true ones, was a trick not unfrequently practised. To deter others from this cheat, a mousquetaire was at length arrested. But it was the *Duchesses*, who daily *swindled* the credulous and young players, of the money which was entrusted to them; and this, openly before their face. None, indeed, was more impudent than a female courtier; hardened and shameless, they continued their mal-practices with impunity. This sharpening of the court was so notorious, that it became the topic of ordinary conversation; and facts, which would have excited indignation and horror in England; among the dissolute courtiers of Versailles, and the frivolous citizens of Paris, were the subject of a laugh. Madame once
said

said to the bankers of the queen's table;—
“ They greatly cheat you, gentlemen,”—
The bankers, too polished courtiers, to confess
the truth, and not desirous of contradicting
it, replied that, that they did not perceive it.

The bankers at length, to obviate the
daily cheating and *sharping* of the *ladies of
the court*, obtained permission of her majesty,
that before play began, the table should be
bordered with a broad ribband, and that no
money should be considered as played for, but
what appeared on the cards, on its outside.
This certainly prevented much cheating;
excepting that some of the *Duchesses* receiving
small sums from those credulous punters who
stood near them, assured them that they
had lost; and latterly, some had the hardiness
even to deny having received any! The king
was seen so rarely at this table, that when
he once appeared, it excited astonishment.
His majesty ever discountenanced this fury
of play, and frequently amused himself at

crowns, while the queen and most of the company, at the royal visits, were playing for enormous sums.

Anecdotes of
her ma-
jesty's mil-
liner.

Among those of her majesty's favourites, who were indebted for this honour to their administration in the offices of frivolity, was her milliner, Mademoiselle Bertin. This woman was admitted into the most familiar habits with the queen, and rose into eminence by more than one public distinction. When the queen entered Paris in 1779, she placed herself in a balcony, with thirty workwomen, and her majesty as she passed was pleased to wave her hand, and cry "There is Mademoiselle Bertin!"—which the milliner was obliged to notice by a most obsequious curtsy. It is probable that the king's good sense was not pleased at his entrance into Paris to observe that her majesty's first attention was paid to her milliner.—Perhaps to humour the joke, he applauded her by beating his hands, which occasioned another
obedience

obedience—all the royal family did the same, and so many curtsies—at length, the faithful apes of their master, every courtier saluted the milliner, which likewise cost her so many curtsies. She sunk at length exhausted, full of honour and fatigue.—But this public distinction made her fortune; she afterwards became the fashionable *Marchande de Modes*.

The milliner, indeed, acquired such importance from her interviews with her majesty, that she employed in her shop the same language the minister used concerning those he had with his majesty in the cabinet. When a fastidious lady could not be pleased with various samples of caps offered to her, Mademoiselle Bertin said, *presentez donc à Madame, des échantillons de mon dernier travail avec sa Majesté*. Shew the lady some specimens of my last *consultation* with her *majesty*. Her majesty's protection became necessary; for having quarrelled with one of her late apprentices for opposing her in business,

ness, and raising altar against altar, she attacked her with the fury of an irritated Virago, tore her hair, and spit in her face. Immediately arose a law suit, and the first counsellors feed, who certainly amused themselves at the cost of their clients. The damages, however, were serious. But the queen, the day before judgment was passed, addressed a letter to the president of the court, that he should first inform her of the whole affair.

The milliner pensioned.

It was not sufficient to insult the public by thus arresting the course of the law, for a milliner, but it appears that a *pension* was also to be the reward of the splendid talents of Mademoiselle Bertin. In the Livre Rouge we find the following article. "Bertin, Demoiselle Jules, Marchande de Modes de la Reine de France——2400 livres." It was thus, says the observer, that the "Poufs anglais; the caracos, or pet-en-l'air; de Philadelphie; the feathers and cotillons à la fultane;

sultane; and above all the enamelled nets," were to be rewarded.

At the birth of the princess, when their majesties visited Paris, the queen did an act The queen does a public act of benevolence. of benevolence which awakened the affection of the Parisians. And since we have few such anecdotes to give, it would be unjust to pass over this pleasing scene. The queen desired that a part of the money reserved for the public rejoicings, might be employed in marrying one hundred poor and virtuous girls with honest tradesmen; a choice was made from each parish. The future spouses formed two rows when their majesties passed the nave of the church of Notre Dame. The new married couples appeared uniformly dressed. The portion of each was five hundred livres; and the queen engaged to pay for the nursing of the first fruits of their marriages; and promised a greater benefit to those mothers who would suckle their own children: And the whole exhibition was crowned

crowned by the marriage of an honest couple, who had lived together above half a century, and who now renewed their vows of affection, which they had sworn, at so distant a period. This venerable pair was attended by all their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren; they wore the same uniform as the younger ones, and they received the same portion. The marriages were celebrated before their majesties; and the scene melted the sympathetic Parisians into tears. It is curious to add, that Mademoiselle Guimard, the queen of the theatre, resolved to give an entertainment at the Vauxhall, and to imitate her majesty in forming, in that public assembly, a marriage. Every one hastened to purchase a ticket; the benevolence was rendered doubly attractive by its frivolity. The portion was to consist not only of twenty-five louis by a contribution from the opera dancers, but also by the sale produced of the entertainment;

Imitated by
an opera
concert.

ment; of which the number of tickets sold amounted to 30,000 livres. The rigorous archbishop of Paris, would not permit the celebration of this marriage at Vauxhall, pretending that it would be a public offence to decency and morals; and he procured in consequence an order from the court to hinder the celebration of the marriage in this temple of pleasure. Mademoiselle Guimard, however, would not lose the glory of this wedding; and it took place at her palace, which was always in a proper state to exhibit a festival. This is a curious instance of the levity of the nation, and the aspiring genius of Mademoiselle Guimard.

At the very moment the government was suppressing ancient and useful offices, on the plea of economy, it was observed, that the queen was creating useless and expensive ones. Mademoiselle de la Borde, happened to find such favour in her majesty's eyes, that not satisfied with having made her, her
reader,

Another
frivolous
office created
by the queen

reader, she created a new office in her favour, called *Dame du Lit* (lady of the bed), and whose duties consisted in opening and shutting the *Curtains* of her majesty, and to sleep at the feet of the bed, when her majesty should judge necessary! This lady was handsome enough to occasion a fit of jealousy to the dutchess of Polignac.

Ingenious
verses made
on her ma-
jesty.

The following anecdote is accompanied with such agreeable verses, that the reader will not be displeased with its introduction. Her majesty had long been caluminated in the effusions of many a wanton scribbler, and in 1784, she asked the chevalier de Boufflers to collect in one song the most glaring defects her censurers had discovered. This living poet, who excels Prior in gaiety and elegance, using the permission allowed him, by the ingenious and lively turn he gave these censures, contrived to make them a ridicule for the most refined flattery. Her majesty, it is said, was so pleased with them, that

that she sung the verses herself. It is not, however, very clear whether they are not to be regarded as a *bitter satire* on her majesty. The reader must judge for himself. The nation were divided in their opinion, and the enemies of the court considered them as an ingenious mode of satirising the queen. In the red book, the chevalier's name appears with a pension of 10,000 livres, as governor of Senegal. The abusive observer gives as a reason for this pension, a gift which the chevalier made to the queen of an infamous nature. We have been informed that the song was found so ingenious, and at the same time of so dubious a character, that her majesty rewarded him at once with a pension, and punished him with a temporary exile from court. Thus Juvenal, it is said, was exiled to the arid deserts of Lybia, by the emperor Nero, who at once pleased with his verses, and dreading them, made him a Prefect. It is thus that the same cause al-

ways produces the same effect, in every age
and in every nation.

We transcribe the song in question.

Voulez-vous savoir les <i>ondit</i> ,	Will you listen to the reports,
Qui courent sur <i>Thémire</i> ?	Which spread about Themira ?
On dit que par fois son esprit,	'Tis said that oft her mind,
Paroit être en délire.	Appears in a delirium.
Quoi ! de bonne foi ?	Indeed ! are you in earnest ?
Oui, mais, croyez moi,	Yes ; but believe me,
Elle sait si bien faire,	She knows to act so well
Que sa déraison,	That even her madness,
Fussiez-vous Caton,	Were you a Cato,
Auroit l'art de vous plaire.	Would have the art of charming you.

On dit que le trop de bon sens	'Tis said that too much sense
Jamais ne la tourmente ;	Never torments her ;
On dit même qu'un grain d'encens	'Tis said too, that a grain of incense
La ravit et l'enchanté,	Ravishes and enchants her.
Quoi ! de bonne foi ?	Indeed ! are you in earnest ?
Oui, mais, croyez moi,	Yes, but believe me,
Elle sait si bien faire.	She knows to act so well,
Que même les dieux	That even the Gods
Descendroient des cieux	Would descend from heaven
Pour l'encenser sur terre.	To worship her on earth.

Vous donne-t-elle un rendez-vous,	Does she give you a rendez-vous,
De plaisir ou d'affaire,	Of pleasure, or of business,
On dit qu'oubliant l'heure et vous,	'Tis said, forgetting the hour & you
Pour elle, c'est misère.	For her, 'tis of no consequence.
Quoi ! de bonne foi ?	Indeed ! are you in earnest ?
Oui, mais croyez moi,	Yes, but believe me,
Se revoit-on près d'elle,	If you are near her again
Adieu tous ses torts,	You forget to complain,
Le tems même alors,	Time ever then
S'envole à tire-d'aile.	Flies on it's rapid wing.

Sans

Sans l'egoïsme rien n'est bon

C'est-là sa loi suprême ;

Aussi s'aime-t-elle, dit-on,

D'une tendresse extrême.

Quoi ! de bonne foi ?

Oui, mais croyez moi,

Laissez-lui son système ;

Peut on la blâmer,

De savoir aimer

Ce que tout le monde aime ?

Without egotism nothing is good,

That is her supreme maxim.

Thus she loves herself, 'tis said,

With a warm affection.

Indeed ! are you in earnest ?

Yes, but believe me,

Leave her to her own system ;

Can one blame her,

To know to love,

What all the world loves ?

It is very needless to give anecdotes of the queen's expences. Too many have been recorded in the most public manner, to require any further investigation. It may be curious to notice, that when her majesty, after her lying-in, received company, she asked a lady, studded over with diamonds, why she was as brilliantly ornamented as a shrine? The ladies in waiting caught the idea, and supposed that her majesty was not pleased with diamonds. None in consequence were longer worn, but by the vulgar Parisians. When her majesty's jeweller waited on her and complained that his business went very ill since her majesty discountenanced the use of diamonds, she consoled

Anecdotes of
the queen's
prodigalities

D d

him

him with the promise of renewing the fashion, and immediately gave an order for a pair of girandoles of the value of a *million* of livres. For the advantage of having the opera removed at her pleasure, to act wherever she chose, it was agreed, in 1780, to pay 150,000 livres per annum. St. Cloud cost six millions. We shall not consume our pages with similar prodigalities. Her majesty always had recourse to the comptrollers general, and her demands always overturned the best system which they had planned for the national benefit. The comptrollers became favourites, or were disliked according to their readiness in complying with her desires. No honest man, therefore, could long remain in office. In 1775, she asked Turgot for 300,000 livres, which was, indeed, a moderate demand. But the comptroller, not expecting such a call which deranged his economical system, begged for a few hours consideration. He hastened

hastened to his majesty, and expressed his anxiety. The king ordered him to bring him all the money in gold. His majesty then laying the treasure before the queen, assured her that those who attended her, disguised the truth; he intreated her to reflect that all the money she saw before her, was drawn from the mere subsistence of the people, and which to exhaust in frivolous dissipation, must be regarded as criminal.

The king's striking reprimand of her majesty's ruinous expences.

Such were the philosophic sentiments of Louis XVI. when under the conduct of an honest comptroller. But it was very different in the year 1784; the queen grew bolder, the comptroller Calonne was her creature, and the king was probably weary of sermonizing her. In April 1784, her majesty applied for no less a sum than 900,000 livres, to pay some *small debts* she had contracted.

Calonne only intreated time. This minister, it is not difficult to suppose by what means, became a great favourite with her

Anecdote of Calonne and the queen.

D d 2

majesty

majesty and of course with Louis XVI. He was the ornament of her levees, and whenever he was wanting in her circles, a marked anxiety was expressed. When the queen asked Calonne for money, he more than once made use of this singular expression: *If it is possible, madam, the affair is done; if it is impossible, it shall be done!* Appropriate language for a French petit-maitre addressing his mistress, but not for a financier in whose hands was reposed the prosperity of an oppressed people!

L O U I S X V I .

LOUIS XVI, had exercised the royal functions since the death of his grandfather ; but had not, though a year had already elapsed, been consecrated at Rheims. This consecration, was an ancient ceremony, which could only have been instituted by the clergy, since every part of it tended to their exaltation, more than to that of the monarch or the people. This ceremony was of the most expensive kind ; and the age was too enlightened to regard it with that holy respect, with which the eyes of former times contemplated it. M. Turgot, who saw its inconvenience in the deplorable state of the finances, and who was at the head

Curious anecdotes relative to the sumptuous consecration of the king.

of the sect of economists, was desirous of abolishing a ceremony, which, though puerile, was ruinous. But the other ministers who were more religious, and more gay, controuled in this respect, the controuler general. Turgot then attempted to have this consecration at Paris, which would be much less expensive than travelling to a distant province, with an equipage which brought a heavy tax to the cultivators of lands, and ruined the lands themselves. But the clergy rigidly attached to their ancient rites, declared this innovation to be dangerous; and the economic project of Turgot, was sacrificed to a superstitious journey, which being performed at the season, when the earth is covered with harvests, ruined the hopes of agriculture, and the first act of the consecrated monarch, was to spread a temporary desolation through one part of his kingdom!

In April 1775, all was in motion for this ceremony. The curious went to examine the
fin-

singular pomp and luxury employed on this occasion; the dresses, the ornaments, and the king's coach, which employed the artists during a year, and cost above 12000*l.* sterling!

A catalogue was also published of the riches drawn from the treasury of the abbey of St. Dennis, to be employed for the consecration of Louis XVI. Among other things, they consisted of the crown of Charlemagne, the sceptre, the hand of justice, the sword of Charlemagne, the clasp for fastening the royal robes, the spurs, and the prayer book used on this occasion. This precious treasury is augmented by many other ornaments; but the most singular curiosity, was the crown itself; a new load of diamonds was added on the occasion, among which were seen the Regent and the Sancy, the two most famous stones in the world; the *crown* only was valued at *eighteen millions* of livres! This enormous prodigality, did not pass unobserved by some, who were more cynical than frivolous. At Soissons,

Striking
picture of
the miseries
of the French
peasants.

one of the city gates was obliged to be pulled down, for the entrance of the king's coach, which, by its immense ornaments, was raised to the height of eighteen feet, and the greater part of the bridges, which his Majesty was to pass, were rebuilt! The miserable peasants, who hourly laboured under their Egyptian task masters, whenever they beheld a traveller, would, sometimes, demand charity on their knees, and raising their eyes to heaven, would draw their hands to their mouths, as a sign of their wanting a little bread. To such a nation, was Louis XVI. hastening to swear surety and protection.

In June, this consecration was the fashionable topic. To instruct the public in all its formalities, there was distributed, "The order of the procession, and ceremonies, to be observed." It is throughout a collection of the most puerile etiquettes.

Among other things it is *ordered*, that the king shall be received in every town, by a
ringing

ringing of bells, by the firing of cannon, by *the acclamations of the people*, and the compliments of the chief magistrate. To *command the future acclamations* of the people, was *then*, it seems, one of the unjust usurpations of the French court. We hear our king *command a play*; but an English monarch to *command public applause*, must first merit it. His virtues must animate the national voice.

The people
commanded
to receive
the king
with loud
applause.

One of these puerile ceremonies is the following. The ecclesiastical peers were to occupy the most honourable seats, on the right hand of the altar; two of them were to seek for the king; but having twice in vain called out for him at the door, were, at length, at the third time to cry aloud, we ask for Louis XVI. whom God has given to us for our king; and then they were to lead the monarch into the church.

It is a fact, not incurious to observe, that although there appeared a national anxiety on this occasion, and that it was imagined at the time,

time, that the affluence of people would be excessive at Rheims, it by no means answered the *expectation of the court*. Notwithstanding that the nobility had invited the Parisian ladies, and every other means had been practised to attract the people; it is certain, that tickets were not only plentiful, but many remained on hand without any demand. If the nobility were disappointed, so likewise were the inn-keepers, who found, when they cast up their accounts, that their provisions remained unsold, and their lodgings unhired. Great precautions, indeed, had been taken at Rheims, to prevent tumult and confusion; it had been resolved, that no carriages should be allowed to enter the city, several days before the consecration; a very prudent, but as it appeared a very unnecessary precaution. So small, indeed, was the affluence, that the gates of the city were left open for their admission, as usual. It appears very clear by this, that the nation at large, did not pay the same

same idolatrous devotion to their king, as in the preceding reigns; the Parisians did not think it worth their while to travel as far as Rheims, on this awful occasion; fifty years past, those who could not have had the convenience of carriages, would have made the journey on foot.

It becomes necessary here, to notice a pamphlet, published a few days before the king's consecration. In the year 1770, M. de Maupeou, made Louis XV. thus express himself at what the French called a *lit de justice*. *We only hold our crown from God. The right of making laws belongs alone to us, independant of, and without sharing it with others.* These dreadful assertions of despotism, were exposed on the present occasion, and refuted by the author of a pamphlet, intituled, "The Friend of the Laws." He could not have seized a happier opportunity for this investigation, than at the very moment of the consecration of a new monarch. He ridicules those adulative ceremonies

A democratic work published at the time of the king's coronation.

ceremonies which were now preparing, and which might deceive the youthful Louis, by ancient prejudices, if good sense, and authentic history had not convinced him, that he and his predecessors never held their crown, but from the consent of the nation; and that the right of making laws, did not rest with the monarch, without sharing this power, and being dependent on others. The whole argument is enforced by a collection of indisputable facts. Louis, perhaps, was at present too fully occupied in the contemplation of regal glories, to find a moment for the reading of a democratic pamphlet; but to speak the truth, his integrity was in no need of such a monitor.

Let us now attend the consecration at Rheims. Every person there felt his heart filled with affection and respect, for that natural benevolence, and sober dignity which Louis exhibited at every hour. When the municipal officers, in receiving his Majesty's orders, asked if they should cover the streets with carpets

pets for his entrance ; no, he answered, I come to see my people, and to be seen by them. When one of the mob approached too near his Majesty, a garde du corps, rudely pushed him away ; he was reprimanded by the king, who called the man, and gave him his hand to kiss, as an indemnification for the blows he had received. During the residence which the monarch made at Rheims, he gave frequent marks of such amiable dispositions.

At length the brilliant hour arrived. The king was consecrated, and the people were admitted to behold their monarch. The enthusiasm caught from this splendid spectacle, (puerile to the philosophic eye) flamed through all the agitated bosoms of the multitude. The repeated cries of *Vive le Roi*, resounded with vehemence from loyal hearts, and such was the sensation communicated through all ranks that his Majesty, the Queen, and the spectators wept. All, indeed, felt the solemnity of this consecration, with a lively sensibility, even to the envoy of Tripoli ; some curious persons, in
this

this moment of enthusiasm, when all eyes were filled with tears, attentively considered the barbarian, and it was with satisfaction that they beheld in him the same transports, and the same tears. The ladies suddenly lost their horror for his black beard, when they saw it receive a new grace from the human dew which sparkled in it.

The people's
consent not
asked at the
coronation
as was usual

The ceremony was not so long as it was expected to have been. It was a sultry scene; and the hot weather made long prayers almost impossible. But those, who *at that moment*, called themselves *Patriotes*, were greatly irritated at the suppression of that part of the ceremony, which appears at least *to ask the people's consent*, for the royal election. However, vain might be this empty form, which, says a writer of the day, is now a mere derision; it was reproached to *the clergy*, (for whom alone this pious magnificence appears to have been instituted) that they should think proper to rescind this part of the ceremony, while they

preserved the minutest articles which concerned themselves.

WHEN in 1775, considerable repairs were made at Versailles, the ministers proposed erecting a temporary residence for his Majesty; his two last predecessors, would certainly have had one. But Louis resolved not to have any built. His answer was, "I will not quit Versailles, but straighten myself in any little corner. A king can live in a house, as well as in a palace!"

The king
careless of
pomp.

THE following traits (young as Lewis then was) to the power of a monarch, unites the patriotism of a citizen. Whatever the Count de St. Germain, and the late M. de Malesherbes, proposed for the people's benefit, his Majesty eagerly accepted; but he did more; he exercised a voluntary severity, independant of the advice of his ministers. When these gentlemen proposed to grant a pension to some, who

Refuses to
grant pen-
sions, that
he may
lighten the
taxes.

had

had strong solicitations made in their favour, the constant answer of his Majesty was, that he would not consent to grant any thing which must be burdensome to his people; that he was actually employed in *paying his debts*, and *diminishing the taxes*; and that, therefore, he could afford nothing for a misplaced magnificence.

LOUIS XV. careless of the future, consumed before hand his state revenues. It was thus, that when he died, he had *anticipated* 180 millions! all which his receveurs generaux, and other rich financiers, had advanced. When M. Turgot, had been some time in office, it was shewn that he had diminished this shameful anticipation of thirty millions, by various reductions, and other savings on these usurious loans. It was also proved, that in time all things would be reinstated in their proper order. It is certain, that by this penurious plan, the courtiers considered Louis as acting unworthy

unworthy of the royal dignity, and Turgot was regarded with hatred. These public blood-suckers, formed parties against Turgot ; they spoke loud ; but it was not the voice of the public ; yet Turgot was dismissed.

THERE was a bluntness in the king's manner, which, indeed, was not adapted to the polished softness of his court. It was a rough honesty. When he found this bluntness in others, he was not displeased. When Guimard, a domestic officer under the old king, and a favourite with Louis XVI. for his age, and honesty, saw him reading a pamphlet, which had for title, " The king beloved by his People," he said, roundly, " Sire, do not believe these *pamphlets* ; you never will be beloved while *bread* is dear."

The king's
honest
bluntness.

It was the foible of Louis XVI. to have a passion for the occupation of a locksmith. He took lessons from two celebrated artists ; and

Anecdote
of a juvenile
occupation, of
which the
king corrected
himself.

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the reason he quitted this amusement, shews, that at an early age he was not incapable of reflection and reformation. These locksmiths, were desirous of presenting his Majesty, on their annual festival of their community, with a curious piece of workmanship. They first consulted Thierry, his first valet, who dissuaded them from it. The artists, vexed to lose their labour, and their hopes, took the first opportunity in their lessons, to inform the king of the intended present, and Thierry's advice. Louis, interrogates his favourite, when they are alone, and desires him to say the real motive of his dissuasion. Thierry hesitates, and only observes, that it was proper to teach these locksmiths a due respect. His Majesty suspecting another reason, presses him to speak in the freest manner. Thierry then answered —“ Sire ! It is because I was fearful that your Majesty's indulgence would give too much publicity to this anecdote of your private life. However innocent may be this kind of occupation,

or

or amusement, it is repugnant to the general prejudice of those kinds of pleasure which a monarch may take ; and it might decrease the favourable idea which the people entertain of you, because they expect to see a character of grandeur in all your actions."

His Majesty heard the sensible Thierry ; dismissed his locksmith, and entirely gave up this unworthy amusement for a sovereign.

WHEN he was dauphin, he never attached himself to the national frivolity. The actors When dauphin, never frivolous. once presented him with a list of a new arrangement of their pieces. The prince received it, and without reading it threw it in the fire, saying, " This is the value I place on these kinds of things." The courtiers stared ; and every one reasoned as he thought proper. This action was then thought to indicate a resolute and firm mind ; but his future life never confirmed that observation.

Anecdote
which shews
his good in-
tentions; his
feeble reso-
lution and
the queen's
power.

The following anecdote reveals his good, and irresolute character. In August 1777, the queen proposed giving a brilliant *fête*, at Trianon, which was to cost 90,000 livres.—It was intended to surprise his Majesty; but the king knew of the affair. He hastened to her Majesty, and desired it might not take place; particularly at a moment, when, for the sake of economy, he deprived himself of a tour to Fontainebleau. In a word he commanded it should not be, and the queen was sensibly mortified. This anecdote soon spread, and his Majesty's excellent motive communicated pleasure throughout the circles of Paris.

But—alas!—the *fête* was, in fact, only *postponed*. The queen persuaded his Majesty to consent to it, and Louis could not refuse her Majesty's repeated attacks. Nothing was more delicious, and it appears, that the first denial only served to increase its splendour.

Two remarkable circumstances took place in his reign, of which one was honourable and political, and the other the reverse. The latter, consists of an order from the council of war, in which his Majesty exacts, that every military officer shall be required to shew proofs of his *nobility*. This order must have quenched the ardour of emulation in the *tiers etat*; and, perhaps, was meant for this purpose. The other was an edict abolishing the the right of mortmain and servitude in the king's domains; and a general extinction of the right of *poursuite*, on the *serfs* and *main mortables*.

This law was a proof, that philosophy can, at length, annihilate prejudices, and by its irresistible influence, soften the heart of the modern Pharaohs.

It is most certain, that Louis XVI. was never a tyrant, but when he was duped, (and that was often) by others. It is curious to observe, that when in 1775, a very dangerous

ferment existed at Paris, owing to the dear-ness of bread ; many *placards* were posted up at Versailles, which contained complaints of this dearness, notwithstanding the extraordinary harvests of that year. The seditious added, that they were in great number ; that they had long patiently waited for, and left to the *minister* all the due time to diminish the price, and furnish the markets ; that they yet gave a few more days ; but that if they were not then satisfied, they would set fire to the four corners of Versailles. For his *Majesty*, however, these persons, preserved the utmost respect, and expressed themselves even in terms of affection. And, indeed, when there was a tumult about this time at Versailles, his Majesty turning with an air of tranquillity to Turgot, said, “ We have for ourselves a pure conscience, and with that we are very strong.”

The author of the “ *Lettres Historiques*” informs us of the following conversation he
had

had with Turgot. Whether the conversation is merely an ingenious fiction, is of little consequence, as the observations are just. Turgot said, on the subject of the royal expenditures: "I cannot obtain a true and exact state of the expences. I see alarming ones, and scarcely any revenues to cover them. This house of the king, and these pensions, are a gulph which absorbs every thing. His Majesty has the *best intentions*; he is naturally inclined to economy; but he cannot summon the force of saying, '*I will*,' nor of suppressing that croud who are in his service; and yet of the most unserviceable nature. He, whom he has chosen for his guide, opposes all reforms. I could save 100 millions annually, if his Majesty would allow me to put an end to all the depredations which take place. When I shew him the necessity of stopping them, he agrees with me; he promises every thing; but a word from the Count de Maurepas, makes these happy dispositions vanish. I

believe the evil is without remedy ; at least, unless a *violent crisis* happens, in which the nation takes on itself to do what *the king dares not undertake himself.*"

CON-

CONCLUSION.

WE shall now close our volume, by offering some observations, on the mass of anecdote which we have arranged. If we reflect on them, we see,

First, PHILOSOPHERS, or rather men who PHILOSOPHERS. abuse this title, alike employed in sapping the throne and the altar. Of these, some modestly propose their doubts on the truths even of natural religion ; others, adroitly distil their poison in works which bear no affinity to Christian principles ; while others yet more audacious, reduce Atheism into a system ; convert *man* into a *plant*, a *machine*, and openly propagate a *materialism*, as uncomfortable, as it is dangerous. The *Muses* sometimes lend their
glowing

glowing pencil to their favourites, who employ all its charms and graces to embellish the blasphemies of impiety, and the temerity of licentiousness. The sober genius of *History*, places in the hands of a Raynal, and a Voltaire, her immortal graver, and with its sharp point, they too often disfigure their works with virulent invectives against religion and government. Besides, this sect of pretended philosophers, abuse their talents to corrupt the morals. Elegant obscenities, which the modest writer would blush to name, circulate in the hands of youth and of the fair. They insinuate depravity, by agitating the soul with a tender voluptuousness; and, as if the imagination of such pernicious writers sufficed not to debauch the mind of the most innocent, the scenes of lubricity are perpetuated in the memory by the skilful representations of the artists.

But it was not sufficient to annihilate religion and morals, it yet remained, to attack
the

the government. We feel a mingled sensation of contempt and pity, when we behold a miserable gazetteer sermonising, correcting, and instructing, sovereigns and their ministers. Some write against existing abuses; others propose reforms, and sketch views of amelioration; all affect the minds of the unhappy people, kindle fire in every muddy brain; and find partisans in every order of the state. In this general fermentation, these reformers overturn the edifice, they tell us, they would only repair; too successful in their attempts, they have broken down in an instant the fabric of fourteen centuries; and this to substitute a government, which has hitherto only shewn chimerical projects; a delusive liberty, and an actual oppression.

Secondly, haughty and ambitious COUR-
THE NOBILITY.
 TIERS, who conceive themselves formed by Heaven of a more exquisite clay; strongly persuaded that a noble birth is the greatest merit, and in consequence, occupying all the
 brilliant

brilliant posts among the clergy, the magistracy, and the military. Courtiers, swollen with the pride of hereditary glory, disdaining every connexion with the *commoner*; yet, when their fortune was broken by luxury and dissipation, would re-establish their splendour by an alliance, with that contemptible race, the *tiers etat*. Courtiers destitute of principles and of humanity; living in the most horrid debauchery, and gratifying their impure appetites, among the ordures of libertinism; borrowing from all, and paying none. Courtiers, who, after having thus dissipated their fortune, and often that of others, then addressed themselves to ministers, and boasted of having ruined themselves in the service of their sovereign. These solicited and obtained pensions, and united their harpy talons, with so many others, in pillaging the national treasury. Courtiers jealous of the pecuniary privileges, which the feudal law attached to their birth, and pretending, because they were born nobles,

nobles, that they were not to pay certain taxes to which the *people* were subjected. Skilful in the arts of intrigue, they even knew to elude those they were obliged to pay. Such was this *nobility* of the court, and the capital! The nobility residing in the Provinces, very commonly were poor; but brave and faithful in their duties to their king and country. In vain they merited the favour of the sovereign; his esteem was all they could obtain; respect and reward were generally the prize of servility and intrigue.

Thirdly, the CLERGY in the first class, CLERGY. offer a spectacle not less disgusting. The majority of the bishops, considered the patrimony of the church as an estate reserved for their enjoyment; accumulated in consequence, all the rich livings of the kingdom; vermilion-cheeked prelates, battenning on fat abbeys joined to their bishopric, abandoned their miserable flock, to consume at Paris their holy revenues, and only returning, to torment their
unhappy

unhappy curés.—Others, courtiers, as well as prelates, initiated in all the mysteries of the court; gliding into the affairs of government while they abandoned to subaltern, and other incapable hands, the reins of that which religion had confided into their's.—Prelates haughty of their descent, persuaded that the cross and the mitre could only be worthily carried by nobles, and shewing a marked contempt of him who, merely by the force of his own merit had attained to ecclesiastical dignities. Prelates, in fine, fixing at their pleasure, the quota of the taxes they levied on their cures, without their participation, while they glaringly spared their own enormous revenues.

The *inferior clergy*, present to our contemplation a numerous race of oppressed men. *Curés* existing with difficulty, on the narrow income of only 700 livres (about 281.) while their *vicaires* frequently only received half this pay! These victims to religion and tyranny, where wholly employed in the spiritual duties of their parish; often did they perform
their

their task with zeal ; but they could have had nothing to bestow on their poor, than the consolation and hope of eternity. Miserable as was the situation of these men, yet their bishop often harrassed them by every species of pontifical oppression. To whom could these European slaves, remote from the world, have recourse ? Not to the court ; their bishop and their enemy was there to oppose them. Did they attempt to assemble ? A decree of the king's council prohibited their meetings. Did they lay with a trembling hand at the foot of the throne, a glowing picture of their unhappy state, the insufficiency of their incomes, the unjust mode of their bishop's taxation, &c. The miserable complainants were chased from the throne, as revolters.

Fourthly, PARLIAMENTS, calling them-
PARLIAMENTS.
 selves an essential part of the French government ; while, in fact, they only obtained this situation by their offices, and their offices by their money. The members of these ambitious bodies, were simply in their origin, the

clerks of the peers and barons of the kingdom ; and while these last were too much occupied in war, or their families became extinct, the *clerks* took the place of their masters and clients. Soon, by successful intrigues, they augmented their pretended rights, and at length were enabled to counterbalance the royal authority. Ardent, in upholding the throne, when the monarch paid them ; audacious in resisting him, when he attempted to reform their vicious administration. They did not, indeed, resist with that active force, which the people have since done, but what was not less terrible, they employed the force of inactivity ; that is, they closed their tribunals. It was thus in 1788, they suddenly suspended their functions, because the unhappy Louis XVI. was desirous of making an equal partition of taxes, on all property indiscriminately. In those dreadful exigencies of the state, (we do not pretend to determine) some say that the king was not then unjust. But the parliaments resisted ;

resisted; and left, during the space of eight months, twenty-four millions of men, without a legal administration. They declared, they could not consent that the king should make an equal partition on all property, as this right only appertained to the *etats generaux*; but *we are informed*, that *before this*, since more than a century, these parliaments had eternally echoed from each other, that they represented the *etats generaux*. It was thus, that they compelled the unfortunate monarch to have recourse to these states, which (some say) have been so fatal to himself and all the kingdom.

The following paragraph on the parliaments, is just now communicated to us, *we give it as we receive it*.

The parliaments who have occasioned so much evil in France, were composed of individuals, who were not less dangerous taken separately. In general, every one of them was a little tyrant in his canton. Those whom they oppressed and quarrelled with, preferred

to yield every thing without any contest, although they might have the law in their favour, because they well knew that a law-suit with them would have no chance of being terminated, or would be given in their favour. And, indeed, a law-suit with them was obtained with great difficulty; not a counsellor or attorney, &c. would be employed against them. Even the intendants of the provinces did not dare to tax them according to the real value of their estates, because they feared them; and, in a word, such was the terror which the neighbourhood of a member of parliament inspired, that in the sale of an estate, the vender generally endeavoured to raise its value, by laying a stress on the distance of the estate, from any belonging to the lawyers of this description.

MINIS-
TERS.

Fifthly, MINISTERS succeeding each other rapidly; and bringing no other talents to their important occupations, than their particular interest.

This

This was the secret motive that directed their conduct, and from hence that parti-coloured system of laws, and those contradictory ordinances, which we have seen during their successive administrations. Men, who arrived and were carried into office, on the stream of the cabal of courtiers; and who, therefore, owed many grateful returns to their protectors. Hence, that enormous mass of pensions, with which they crushed the nation to maintain themselves in place, and to feed their craving creatures. Men of cupidity! They made in general of the national incomes, their individual estate, and many even delivered it over to their mistresses. Men of ambition and despotism! If, like the infamous Abbé Terrai, they did not lay down for their principle, that *all belonged to the king*, they did not less act up to it. They distributed lettres de cachet, to seize the persons they chose, and fabricated decrees to lay a new tax on private property. The laws were often dictated by their private

CONCLUSION.

interest, or by that of their subalterns, and, what was still worse, often by that of their mistresses. If some brought into office, a pure heart and an enlightened mind, they passed like a shadow. The croud of worthless courtiers, interested in maintaining the reigning corruption, would have turned out Colbert himself, if Colbert had been in office. Their robberies at Versailles, were authorised and public ! Let us also reflect, that the vicious or stupid ministers had for their subalterns, in the provinces, men of their stamp, stupid or vicious. We are now enabled to judge of the multitude of disorders of every kind in a kingdom, so vast, as that of France !

The KING.

Sixthly, And that the cup of the national misfortunes should overflow, a KING, an honest man it is true ; who saw the existing abuses, but devoid of energy to prevent or to repress them ; who wished for the public good, but without the courage requisite to break down the barriers that were opposed to it ;
who

who adopted all the plans which his ministers proposed to him, because they all wore the appearance of the good he sought, but who did not perceive that in adopting these various and contradictory plans, his progress was retrograde ; that he destroyed his own work, and presented to his people the sad spectacle of a government, without fixed and determinate principles ; an administration floating at the caprice of ministers ; or led by the hand of intrigue ; and, in fine, a king, whose inclinations were those of rectitude, but, rendered null through weakness ; while those of his ministers were almost always corrupt and omnipotent.

But this feebleness, this vacillation in the government of Louis XVI. was not the only defects. The greatest evil was the mal-administration of his finances. The treasury was exhausted by the most shameful and ruinous charges. We read with indignation, those which are registered in the well-known *livre rouge*.

rouge. It is there we may see, that the most considerable pensions were acceded to persons who not only had not rendered any public service, but who were unworthy of favour, by many considerations. The national treasury had become like those ships, which, loaded with the riches of India, every Algerine considers as his right to attack and pillage. To bear, but for a few years, these excessive depredations, they were constrained to satiate themselves on the blood of the people. But even new *taxes* did not suffice. They then had recourse to *loans*; and these loans, a thousand times more dangerous than even the taxes, completed with their weight the national ruin.

Let us reflect, that in spite of all these grievances, the nation might yet have existed. Louis XVI. with one stroke of his pen, might have annihilated the pensions, and other destructive inutilities; he might have relieved the people, by *whom he was beloved*. But the
croud

croud of courtiers rendered even his desires abortive. When he saw the approaching ruin, he ordered an equal partition of taxes on all estates ; but the parliament, who then must have paid like the people, opposed this salutary proceeding. It was then he fell into the net of the banker Necker ; he assembled the *etats generaux*. With a more decisive will, he might have passed without this fatal resource. But what was the situation of poor Louis XVI. at that moment ! Pressed by the courtiers ; betrayed by the parliaments ; Necker agitating the people ; and a concealed faction preparing the Revolution.—This faction prevailed ; and honest Louis XVI. was the victim of all ! !

An honest man appears to be equally offensive to both parties. But the peaceful hour will arrive, when the clouds of faction will disappear—and TRUTH and LIBERTY (the amiable vision of the philosophic politician) will be united on their pure summits.

CONCLUSION.

We beg leave to close our volume, by entreating, at this critical period, both parties to reflect on the following pathetic lines.

Ferme en tes sentimens, et simple dans ton cœur,
 AIME la VERITE, mais PARDONNE à l'ERREUR.
 Fuis les emportemens d'un zele atrabilaire;
 Ce MORTEL qui s'EGARE, est un HOMME, est ton
 FRERE;

Sois SAGE pour toi seul, COMPATISSANT pour lui;
 Fais TON BONHEUR enfin, par le BONHEUR D'AUTRUI.

VOLTAIRE DE LA LIBERTE.

AND now having concluded our proposed labours, and declaring ourselves lovers of genuine Liberty, and, therefore, enemies to that licentioufness of principle, which in fact, is only despotism under a more cruel and savage form, we shall extract a passage from Rousseau, which requires no other comment

comment than what the reader will himself make. What candid mind will deny that with prophetic energy this great man here describes the *present state* of the French government, and what honest man will not rejoice, if the perturbations of the present democracy shall subside into order, and into Freedom?

Il en est de la LIBERTE comme de ces alimens solides et succulens ou de ces vins genereux propres à nourrir et fortifier les temperamens robustes qui en ont l'habitude, mais qui accablent, ruinent et enivrent les foibles et delicats qui n'y sont point faits. Les Peuples une fois accoutumés a des maitres ne sont plus en etat de s'en passer. S'ils tentent de secouer le joug ils s'eloignent d'autant plus de la liberté que prenant pour elle une licence effrenée qui lui est opposée, leurs REVOLUTIONS les livrent presque toujours à des SEDUCTEURS qui ne font qu'aggraver leurs chaines. Le peuple Romain

lui meme, ce modele de tous les peuples libres ne fut point en etat de se gouverner en sortant de l'oppression des Tarquins. Avili par l'esclavage et les travaux ignominieux qu'ils lui avoient imposés, ce n'etoit d'abord qu'une stupide populace qu'il fallut menager et gouverner avec la plus grande sagesse afin que s'accoutumant peu à peu a respirer l'air salutaire de la liberté, ces ames enervées ou plutot abruties sous la tyrannie acquissent par degrés cette severité de mœurs, et cette fierté de courage, qui en firent enfin le plus respectable de tous les peuples.

It is with LIBERTY as with those solid and succulent aliments, or those generous wines, proper to nourish and fortify robust constitutions which are used to them; but which overpower, ruin and intoxicate the feeble and delicate, which are not made to support them. The people once accustomed to masters, are incapable of passing without them. If they try to shake off the yoke,

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they

they remove themselves the farther from liberty, because mistaking for it an ungovernable licentiousness which is its contrary, their REVOLUTIONS give them up almost always to SEDUCERS who only augment their chains. The Roman people themselves, that model of all free nations, were not in a state of governing themselves, when they first rushed from the oppression of the Tarquins. Debased by slavery and its ignominious labours, they were at first but a stupid populace, which it was necessary to manage and govern with the greatest prudence, that accustoming themselves little by little to draw the salutary air of liberty, those enervated souls, or rather *brutalised* under tyranny, acquired by degrees that severity of manners, and that hardness of courage which at length made them the most respectable of people*.

* From ROUSSEAU's Dedication of his Essay on the Origin of the Inequality of Men to the Republic of Geneva.



Page	3, line 14,	for	<i>Fanatism</i>	read	<i>Fanaticism.</i>
	11,	8,	<i>Republican,</i>		<i>Republic.</i>
	11,	14,	<i>cannot,</i>		<i>can</i>
	29,	15,	<i>caluminiating,</i>		<i>calumniating.</i>
	74,	17,	<i>were,</i>		<i>was.</i>
	78,	7,	dele <i>he</i>		
	80,	8,	<i>ribbond,</i>		<i>riband.</i>
	88,	10,	<i>particular,</i>		<i>his particular</i>
	97,	10,	<i>to,</i>		<i>too.</i>
	112,	21,	<i>elogium,</i>		<i>eulogium.</i>
	125,	16,	dele <i>after</i> and put a colon after		<i>ingratitude.</i>
	130,	5,	dele <i>and,</i>		
	131,	10,	<i>and the</i>		<i>and with.</i>
	155,	18,	<i>Sentimantalists—</i>		<i>Sentimentalists</i>

*** THE rapidity with which this Work has passed through the Press, has occasioned, no doubt, many other blunders. The uncouth mixture of I and WE has also arisen from the same cause, and the writers claim the indulgence of the candid.

